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## **The Pastor and His Sermon**

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### **Preaching with Power**

In the course of the last fifteen or twenty years much was said and done to discredit the pulpit as an instrument of power in the building of the kingdom of God. Even within the sanctuary itself strident voices proclaimed with prophetic finality that the pulpit had lost its power and that the day of preaching had passed forever. Systematic efforts were put forth in many quarters to supplant the preacher by religious technicians in the fields of worship, education, social service, and organization; and men quite generally staked their hopes for a virile and world-conquering Church upon agencies and methods designed specifically to meet the challenge of the new age.

But what has happened? One by one these much-heralded panaceas have been thrown into the discard; yet the pulpit continues to occupy its rightful place: the very center of the Church's worship and work. Nothing has been found to take its place. On the contrary, the experiences of the various denominations have again demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that "the foolishness of preaching" is, and will ever remain, the most effective means of touching the hearts and molding the lives of men and thus extending the borders of the Kingdom. As a result there is at present a surprising revival of interest in preaching on every side; and in almost every Protestant communion both clergy and laity are looking to the regular pulpit of the Church for instruction, guidance, comfort, and inspiration in the turbulent days that lie ahead. Thus Dr. H. A. Prichard, a rector in the Episcopal Church, which in its tradition has never been guilty of over-estimating the value of preaching, makes the bold assertion: "Preaching, I believe, is the future stronghold of the Church. . . . The Church of the future will be, first and foremost, a preaching

Church; and it is time we recognized the fact and trained ourselves and the generation of preachers that is coming to take the fullest advantage of the implied challenge.”<sup>1)</sup> And in his Yale Lectures Dr. P. T. Forsyth ventures the unequivocal declaration: “With its preaching Christianity stands or falls.”<sup>2)</sup> Accordingly, our Lutheran Confessions are thoroughly up to date when they say: “Nothing is more effective in keeping the people with the Church than good preaching.”<sup>3)</sup>

At the same time it cannot be denied that a large portion of the Church’s membership and here and there even entire congregations have grown weary of the preaching they hear. The vacant pews in many churches, the listless worshipers, and the resultant decay of spiritual life bear eloquent testimony to this fact; and the bitter complaints of discouraged preachers lend a melancholy emphasis to it. Nothing can be plainer than that the American pulpit of the present day in all too many instances lacks power—the power to attract and hold men and, above all, to regenerate and save them. The following indictment of contemporary preaching is therefore on the whole just and to the point: “Protestantism has trusted too largely to the quantity of its preaching. It has commonly deluged its devotees with sermons, played spendthrift with formal religious discourses to the great detriment of their quality and the great boredom of many of their hearers. We need not be surprised therefore at the present revulsion against preaching. We have richly deserved it. We have preached too much and not well enough.”<sup>4)</sup> *The Literary Digest* summarizes the whole matter in the blunt statement: “Pulpit power is one of the most pressing needs of the clergyman of today.”

But does this apply to the clergy of the Lutheran Church? To a great extent it does. True, there is still much strong, noble preaching among us, for which we thank God and take courage; and even the average pulpit in our Church is far from being effete. Owing to its Scriptural foundation and evangelical character our preaching possesses qualities and powers which have long since vanished from the majority of American pulpits. And owing to the efficacy of the Word it does bring results. But are we preachers measuring up as messengers of the Word? Do we preach as well as we might? Far from it. At times even the best among

1) *The Minister, the Method, and the Message*, pp. X. 4.

NOTE. -- Most of the quotations in this article have been taken from modern non-Lutheran sources in order to prove that among the most successful preachers of other denominations many have returned to the time-honored homiletic principles taught at our seminaries.

2) *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 1.

3) *Apology*, 24.

4) S. McComb, *Preaching in Theory and Practise*, p. XI.

us are indolent; at times we are painstaking, but coldly professional; at times we fall victim to "a sort of sacred torpidity"; at times there is only artificial fervor; and at times—let us admit it—we miss the mark entirely in spite of all diligence, sincerity, and zeal. In short, much of our preaching is without that power which one might reasonably expect to find in a Christian pulpit.

And yet it need not be. Every true ambassador of God has the privilege of preaching with power, no matter how modest his endowments and how disheartening his handicaps may be. But, mark well, such power must be sought after with earnestness and cultivated day by day in the light of God's countenance; for it is not a permanent endowment bestowed upon the preacher at his ordination nor a mysterious something put on with the pulpit gown.

*But what can we do to invest our humble preaching of the Word with greater power?*

To begin with, we ought to remember that pulpit power is not a superficial matter. It does not consist in a radiant personality, or in a saintly unctuousness, or in a voice that can soothe and move to tears and call to battle at will, or in the music of words, or in depth and energy of thought, or in the glow of fervid eloquence. It cannot be worked up. On the contrary, "it belongs to those preachers who, having a great message worthy to move the souls of men, are themselves so moved that they forget themselves in the message and cry from their hearts, *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam!*"<sup>5)</sup>

Accordingly the power of a Christian preacher resides first and foremost in *his message*. It is the content of the sermon that really counts. Strange as it may seem, this fact, which has always been axiomatic among Bible Christians, is flatly denied by famous pulpit orators and professors of preaching in our day. These disciples of liberal theology assert with characteristic authoritativeness that "pulpit power does not have to do with the content of the message" and that "the preacher is always more important than his sermon." Now, it is true of course that the personality of the preacher is of tremendous importance for his work in the pulpit; but even at that, the truth which he preaches is of far greater importance. In the last analysis, it is the only thing that is absolutely essential. If a man, speaking as the ambassador of God, proclaims "the truth of God" in his sermons, if he can truthfully say to his Master: "I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation; I have not concealed Thy loving-kindness and Thy salvation from the great congrega-

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5) T. G. Soares, *University of Chicago Sermons*, VII.

tion," Ps. 40, 10, then his preaching will invariably bear fruit; it will be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," Rom. 1, 16. Hence the preacher who yearns for greater pulpit power should look first of all to his message.

If our message is to be clothed with power from on high, it must be *drawn directly from the sacred Word* given by inspiration of God Himself. Neither private speculations nor the conjectures of contemporary philosophers, neither the results of scientific research nor discussions of burning problems in sociology, economics, and statecraft, dare intrude upon the hallowed precincts of the pulpit. Only God's truth has a rightful place here. Hence the preacher's watchword must ever be: "Thus saith the Lord." In his sermons he must reveal God to his people as God has revealed Himself in Holy Writ. He must teach the whole plan of salvation. He must inculcate the ethical principles which God has established as the guide-lines for all Christian living. In short, he must do everything in his power to ground his congregation firmly in the great doctrines of the Bible, in the Law and in the Gospel. This must always remain the first great objective of all our preaching; for "no matter how rich our sermons may be in exhortation, reproof, and consolation, if they contain no doctrine, they are barren and without substance."<sup>6)</sup> It is the proclamation of divine truth, and nothing else, that makes the preacher's message vibrant with regenerating and sanctifying power.

A renewed emphasis upon this fundamental homiletic principle is much in order at the present time. There is an ever-increasing number of Lutheran preachers, apparently sincere in their work, who have come to the conclusion that the careful and systematic presentation of doctrine has no appeal for the twentieth-century mind. Such preaching, they tell us, is too abstract, too dogmatic, too dry. There must be a different approach, more directly to the heart. Accordingly they are turning to lighter and shallower forms of preaching, to a more emotional and inspirational type. But it must be evident to every one who understands the modern mind that they are making a tragic mistake. Lurid descriptions of present-day conditions, high-powered exhortations, clamorous appeals, and effervescent eloquence make no lasting impression upon the man of today. He must be reached primarily through the intellect and not merely by way of the emotions. His demand is for facts, especially also in the sermons he goes to hear. Says Dr. W. L. Stidger of the Boston University School of Theology: "By a wide reading of sermons, by hearing the great preachers of our time, and by observing the types of sermons which please people, I have learned

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6) C. F. W. Walther, *Pastoraltheologie*, p. 81.

that people want facts in a sermon. A man need not be particularly eloquent if he has facts. Time and again I have noted that men with new information, men with facts, will hold the attention of an audience, while a much more eloquent speaker without facts finds a restless and resisting audience."<sup>7)</sup> And Dr. August Schowalter, one of the most discriminating preachers of modern Germany, puts the matter thus: "To find the proper approach to the man of today is the task of present-day preaching. . . . The man of today does not submit forthwith to external authority; he must be conquered within. But custom and tradition do not bind him within, frequently not even without; his philosophy of life is self-willed and chaotic. True, he does not shut himself up against those forces which seek to influence his emotions and his soul-life; but such influences achieve no permanent results, neither do they equip him for his defense against the attacks of unbelief and his own doubts. In view of these facts our preaching to the modern man must, more than ever before, be an intellectual presentation of the great truths of the Christian faith and must be designed to satisfy, as far as this is possible, the craving for actual knowledge. The preaching of our age must again be an indoctrination of the people in the Christian faith, as it was at the time of the Reformation."<sup>8)</sup> And Bishop Adna Wright Leonard of the Methodist Episcopal Church corroborates this with the following declaration: "The demand of this day is for doctrinal preaching. To some this statement may seem to be a misstatement. Nevertheless—I say it advisedly after many years of effort to ascertain the mind of the laity—the demand is for doctrinal preaching."<sup>9)</sup>

Doctrinal preaching has always been the most distinctive and potent element in the preaching of the Lutheran Church. At its best, Lutheran preaching has been highly intellectual, and even the rank and file of our pulpits have hitherto given due prominence to the great doctrines of the Bible. It would be a great tragedy indeed if we, in these critical times, would forsake the old paths and recklessly place our feet in the ways which have already led many others to disaster.

But if we would attain to fulness of power in preaching, we dare not rest satisfied with preaching *about* the Scriptures; on the contrary, *we must preach the Scriptures themselves*. As stated before, we have the solemn duty to instruct our congregations in the great doctrines of the Bible; but if we are wise and faithful, we shall do this on the basis of the Bible itself and not upon the authority of a text-book on Christian doctrine or of predigested

7) *Preaching Out of the Overflow*, p. 45.

8) *Vom Reiche Gottes*, Foreword.

9) *Ancient Fires on Modern Altars*, p. 67.

sermon helps. Our sermons should not only be thoroughly seasoned with Scripture, as Jerome demands, but should literally grow out of the sacred text and in turn lead our congregations back into it; for the Scriptures, and only the Scriptures, are the inspired Word of God, the repository and vehicle of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures, and only the Scriptures, are the inexhaustible reservoir of that mysterious power by virtue of which our preaching becomes effective upon the hearts of men. After all, St. Paul charged Timothy to "preach the Word," 2 Tim. 4, 2; and Jesus Himself said: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," John 6, 63.

At this point many hard-working preachers make a fatal mistake, which robs their pulpit utterances of much of the power which they might otherwise have. They speak to their people as if the average churchgoer really knew and used the Bible. Hence many of their sermons go wide of the mark. Luther used better judgment. In the monastery he had followed the sermon method in vogue among the scholastics, a method which operated more with logical distinctions than expositions of Scripture; but when he began to preach at Wittenberg to the common people, who had no Bibles, he adopted an expository method, in which the explanation of the text, the clear statement of doctrine and the practical application of text and doctrine to the needs of the people, were the most prominent features. Let us follow Luther's example. Rightly does Forsyth say: "Bible preaching means that we adjust our preaching to the people's disuse of the Bible."

Of course, such preaching cannot be shaken out of the sleeve. On the contrary, it requires *regular and painstaking study* of the Bible and unlimited patience with the individual sermon text. But it will soon become a benediction to both preacher and people. Unfortunately many of us preachers "know the Bible only in the way of business, as a sermon quarry. But the true ministry must live on it. We must speak to the Church not from experience alone, but still more from the Word. We must speak from within the silent sanctuary of Scripture. We do not always realize how eager people are to hear preaching which makes the Bible wonderful by speaking from its very interior, as men do who live in it and wonder themselves."<sup>10)</sup> If we did realize it, we would make our sermons more Scriptural in the fullest sense of the term; for in the present generation this is the royal road to true pulpit power.

Since, however, the sermon is not to be a monolog, but a purposeful religious address to living men and women, it must also

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10) *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 38.

be *tempered to their specific needs*. In other words, it must focus the beneficent light of Scripture upon the perplexing problems of faith and life with which they are wrestling and thus provide them with divine guidance, exhortation, comfort, and help, 2 Tim. 3, 16; Rom. 15, 4. This of course presupposes that the preacher, as the shepherd of the flock, knows and understands his people, and that not merely *en masse*, as a congregation, but also individually, as separate personalities, with heartaches and crosses, temptations and fears, that belong to them alone. But even this is not enough. Well did Luther say that the preacher must watch over his congregation "with a real mother heart"; for to be influenced for good, the people must be loved much. Deep and abiding sympathy with our people in all their conflicts and sorrows and an earnest solicitude for their spiritual welfare must pervade all our pulpit discourses as well as our private ministrations. "No minister can profit his people to a great extent unless he can throw his whole soul into his subject when he preaches and identify himself with all the interests and circumstances of his flock. If he announces divine vengeance against the ungodly and warns the sinner of his danger, let him imitate his great Master when He beheld Jerusalem and wept over it. His heart should swell with agony and his eyes become a fountain of tears in behalf of sinners."<sup>11)</sup> Brethren, do our sermons really measure up in this respect? Are we not perhaps confronted at this point with one of the chief causes of our ineffectiveness as preachers? As one thinks back over his own preaching, he is reminded of the sermon of which Emerson said that he could not tell from it "whether the preacher had ever lived, loved, sinned, or suffered, had ever known the tug of temptation or the torment of dismay, had ever heard the laugh of a child or looked into an open grave."<sup>12)</sup>

It is evident therefore that our preaching, in order to wield the desired power over our congregations, must not only be Scriptural (*schriftgemaess*) and personal to the hearer (*gemeindemaess*), but also timely (*zeitgemaess*). That is, it must take into account the age in which we live and apply the truths of Holy Scripture to its peculiar conditions and problems. A sermon which falls short in this respect is an anachronism and will almost invariably leave the hearers cold. This has been emphasized so much in recent years, however, that many preachers have, consciously or unconsciously, gone to the other extreme. While endeavoring to gage their preaching to the demands of the hour, they have lost sight of those timeless truths which, transcending all human thought, tower aloft in isolated and immutable grandeur,

11) *American Pulpit*, III, 99.

12) J. F. Newton, *The New Preaching*, p. 40.

like snow-capped mountain peaks unaffected by the change of the seasons below. As a result their preaching has become shallow, trivial, and ineffective. May God graciously preserve the preachers of the Lutheran Church from this modern pitfall! We dare not dip the messages we bring to God's people out of the shallow pools of passing events, but must draw them from the deep fountains of everlasting truth. While fixed upon the present, our preaching must be anchored firmly in both eternities. In a certain sense it must be timeless, *ewigkeitsgemaess*; for in the utter timelessness of Christian truth lies its real grandeur, its tremendous appeal and captivating power.

All preaching that rests upon this foundation will be strong, noble, elevating, powerful. Positive in its approach to the great questions of time and eternity, it will speak with conviction and the note of authority. It will in truth be a preaching of the Word of God.

And if the preacher himself is a man of faith, one whom the love of God has fully immersed in the *baptisma sanguinis, fluminis, flaminis*, the message will also be brought to the congregation in a manner befitting its high and holy character. There will be no need of working up oratorical power by artificial methods, nor will there be any danger of prostituting the pulpit with "that light and frothy sort of eloquence which consists only in a jingling multiplicity of words." Carried away with the importance and glory of his message, the preacher speaks with flaming heart "as a dying man to dying men." He preaches with "blood earnestness" as for eternity. He declares what he himself believes and loves. And all the while he depends upon God for the success of his message.

Thus every sermon which is a sermon in truth is twice-born, once in the study and once in the pulpit; but both times out of the Word of God, the faith of the preacher, and fervent prayer. As a result the divine afflatus rests upon the preacher, and the preacher's message goes forth endowed with the power of God.

E. J. FRIEDRICH

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### Kleine Hesekielstudien

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#### 2. Das Buch Hesekiel's

Im ersten Artikel dieser kleinen Hesekielstudien sind die eigenartige, kraftvolle Persönlichkeit des Propheten, seine Zeit und seine Aufgabe etwas eingehender geschildert worden. Wir fassen nun einen weiteren Punkt näher ins Auge, nämlich seine Darstellungsweise in seinem großen Buche.

Der kraftvollen Persönlichkeit des Propheten entspricht die Rede,

der Stil, die ganze Weise der Darstellung. Der französische Naturforscher und Philosoph Buffon hat zuerst das jetzt geflügelte Wort gesprochen: „Le style est l'homme“, „Der Stil ist der Mensch“. Auch da gehört Hesekiel, daß wir so sagen, in eine Klasse für sich. Ist des Jesaja Eigentümlichkeit, wie alte und neue Bibelforscher richtig erkannt haben, die hohe, majestätische Ruhe der Rede, so daß seine Sprache sich einem Strome vergleichen läßt, der in majestätischer Ruhe dahinsießt; ist des Jeremias Eigentümlichkeit der klagende, schmerzlich bewegte Stil, der öfters breit und fast monoton wird, als ob aus seinem Auge immer Tränenquellen fließen möchten, Jer. 9, 1: so läßt sich hingegen Hesekiel einem tosenden Bergstrom vergleichen, der alles vor sich niederrwirft. Es fehlt bei ihm nicht die didaktische Rede, die mit Vorliebe an Sprichwörter und Gleichnisse anknüpft, Kap. 12, 22. 23; 16, 44. 45; 17, 2; 18, 2; 20, 49. Aber auch diese Redeweise bewegt sich in langen, erschöpfenden Sätzen, zeigt rhetorische Ausführlichkeit, erhebt sich auch zu dichterischer, schwungvoller Höhe und verwendet öfters direkt die poetische Form des *ονοματος*, des *κλαγητος*, Kap. 19. 27. 32. Schon in solchen Reden zeigt sich Hesekiel als ein Meister des Details. Aber seine Haupt-eigentümlichkeit ist die symbolische, allegorische Darstellungswise. Wir finden in seinem Buche eine Fülle wieder bis in das kleinste Detail ausgemalter Visionen, kühner Bilder und besonders auch merkwürdiger symbolischer Handlungen, durch die er dem Volke recht konkret vor Augen führt, was es entweder ist oder was es werden soll. Diese merkwürdigen symbolischen Handlungen sind das eigentliche Charakteristikum dieses Propheten, und da ist seine Rede voll Glut und verfügt über einen wunderbaren Reichtum majestätischer Anschauungen und kühner Bilder, ist im vollsten Sinne des Wortes originell, verwendet auch Ausdrücke und Wortformen, die sonst nicht wieder vorkommen und wohl zum Teil von ihm selbst gebildet worden sind. Und doch ist solche symbolische Darstellung nicht verschwommen, sondern fest gestaltet und bestimmt. Er hält seinen Gegenstand so lange fest, bis er ihn nach allen Seiten hin durchgeführt und ausgemalt hat. Sein Auge ist ebenso auf das Ganze wie auf das einzelne gerichtet. Viele Kapitel legen davon Zeugnis ab. So zeichnet er in einer symbolischen Handlung auf einem Siegel die bevorstehende Belagerung Jerusalems, Kap. 4; er bildet ab das verschiedene Schicksal des besiegteten Volkes durch Abschneiden seines Haares, von dem dann ein Drittel mit Feuer verbrannt, ein anderes Drittel mit dem Schwert geschlagen, das dritte Drittel durch den Wind zerstreut werden soll, Kap. 5. Der Prophet selbst muß 390 Tage auf seiner linken Seite und vierzig Tage auf seiner rechten Seite liegen, um die Misserat des Hauses Israel und des Hauses Juda darzustellen und die Strafe dafür zu tragen, Kap. 4, 4—17. Die nahe bevorstehende Zerstörung Jerusalems soll er durch einen siedenden Topf mit Fleischstücken veranschaulichen, Kap. 24, 1—14, und in derselben Absicht wird ihm sein eigenes Weib durch einen plötzlichen Tod entrissen,

und er darf nicht öffentlich darüber klagen und weinen, V. 15—27. Bisweilen sind seine symbolischen Handlungen so auffallend, daß For- scher wie von Orelli und Klostermann angenommen haben, der Prophet sei zeitweilig leiblich schwer leidend gewesen und Gott habe solche zeit- weilige Lähmung, gewisse Störungen der Muskel- und Nervenopera- tionen, die man medizinisch heutzutage als Hemiplegie oder Halb- gelähmtheit, spastic paraplegia, oder "Little's disease" bezeichnet, in seinen Dienst gezogen, gerade wie er den plötzlichen Tod des Weibes Hesekiel's für seine Zwecke benutzt habe. Man hat dabei besonders die eben erwähnte symbolische Handlung im Auge, daß Hesekiel 430 Tage liegen sollte, auf seiner linken Seite 390 Tage und auf der rechten Seite vierzig Tage. Diese 430 Tage sind wohl eine Anspielung auf die Zeit des ägyptischen Aufenthalts der Kinder Israels in Ägypten, der 430 Jahre dauerte, 2 Mos. 12, 40, und sie werden hier genannt als Vorbild für die Strafzeit des Exils. Auf derselben Linie liegt die Stummheit oder Stummlosigkeit (Alalie) des Propheten im dritten Kapitel, wo auch seine Bindung und Fesselung erwähnt wird, V. 25—27. Doch hat diese Annahme leiblicher Krankheit kaum genügenden Grund, da, wie Möller in seiner trefflichen „Einleitung in das Alte Testament“, S. 120, hervorhebt, „Zeit und Dauer der Starrheit und des Stum- feins jeweils vor dem Eintritt dieses Zustandes dem Propheten von Jahve verkündet und befohlen wird als besonderes Zeichen für die Gola“ (Exulantenschaft).

Infolge dieser bildreichen symbolischen Darstellungsweise sind freilich Hesekiel's Reden oft recht geheimnisvoll, dunkel und rätselhaft, schwierig für das Verständnis, weshalb eben Hieronymus, wie schon be- merkt, Hesekiel's Buch „einen Ozean und ein Labyrinth der Geheimnisse Gottes“ genannt hat. Und doch sind diese Reden zugleich so ganz er- haben und das innerste Herz ergreifend. Wir erinnern nur an die Schilderung des Wagens Gottes, Kap. 1, an die wunderbaren Gesichte von dem Feld voller Totengebeine, Kap. 37, von dem aus Gottes Thron hervorbrechenden Lebensstrom und von dem neuen geistlichen Tempel, Kap. 40—48. Der Schriftforscher wird sich durch diese Schwierig-keiten nicht abhalten lassen, gerade auch diesen großen Propheten zu studieren. Hat doch die gewaltige Sprache und Darstellungsweise Hesekiel's selbst Ungläubige hingerissen. Schiller las diesen Propheten vor allen Propheten mit Begeisterung und nahm sich wohl zehnmal vor, im Alter noch Hebräisch zu lernen, um ihn in der Ursprache lesen zu können. Herder, der zwar in seiner Theologie ganz rationalistisch war, aber als Dichter ein Verständnis gerade für sprachliche Schönheit hatte, wie seine Schrift „Vom Geiste der ebräischen Poesie“ zeigt, hat einmal bemerkt: was der große Schluß unter den Griechen, der noch gewaltigere Shakespeare unter den Engländern sei, das sei der große Hesekiel unter den Juden. Und ein anderer deutscher Dichter und Gelehrter, Schlegel, ruft einmal voller Verwunderung aus, es gebe nur drei große

Dichter: Homer, Hesekiel und Goethe.<sup>1)</sup> Gerade hier gilt auch der alte Grundsatz, daß die Schrift sich selbst auslegt und daß, je tiefer man überhaupt in die Schrift eindringt, desto besser man auch die schwierigen Abschnitte verstehen wird. So hat auch das einzige prophetische Buch des Neuen Testaments, die Offenbarung St. Johannis, vielfach Hesekiel aufgenommen und zugleich erklärt, wie eine Vergleichung von Hesekiel 38 und Offenb. 20, Hesekiel 40—48 und Offenb. 21 und 22 zeigt, von andern Parallelen, wie Offenb. 4, 6—9; 10, 8—11 (Hesekiel 1 und 3), jetzt abgesehen.

Bei der Erörterung der merkwürdigen Sprache des Propheten ist auch zu beachten, daß er eine Anzahl ihm ganz eigentümlicher und stets wiederkehrender Worte und Sätze hat. So wird er von Jehovah ungefähr neunzigmal mit dem Ausdruck „Menschenkind“, „son of man“, angeredet, um eben die souveräne Größe, Stärke und Majestät Gottes herzuheben gegenüber dem armen, kleinen, geringen Erdenwurm, Kap. 2, 1. Er nennt Juda und Jerusalem siebzehnmal ein „ungehorsames Haus“, „a rebellious house“, Kap. 2, 5. Wenn er eine neue Offenbarung bekommt, schildert er deren Eintreten gewöhnlich mit dem Satz „Die Hand des Herrn kam über mich“, „The hand of the Lord was upon me“, Kap. 3, 22, und nicht weniger als 73mal schlägt er seine Reden mit dem Wort Jehovahs „Sie sollen erfahren, daß ich der Herr [Jehovah] bin“, „And they shall know that I am the Lord“, Kap. 6, 10. Hesekiel's Sprache enthält auch, wie schon bemerkt, eine Anzahl ungewöhnlicher, wohl von ihm selbst gebildeter Wörter und Wortformen, besonders in dem Gesicht von dem neuen Tempel; und eben dort finden sich auch wiederholt Hapaxlegomena, veranlaßt durch die Neuheit und Eigenart der Schilderung. Diese Wahrnehmung haben schon die alten jüdischen Gelehrten, die Massoreten, gemacht und haben darum den Text, den sie doch in keiner Weise ändern durften, mit sogenannten circelli<sup>(\*)</sup> und puncta extraordinaria<sup>(...)</sup> bezeichnet.<sup>2)</sup> Es ist aber eine verkehrte Ansicht moderner Kritiker (Cornill, Smend, Krätzschmar), daß die Juden absichtlich den Text gefälscht hätten, um die Verschiedenheit des Serubabel'schen Tempels mit Hesekiel's Bild zu vertuschen. Wir werden später sehen, daß diese ganze Schilderung des neuen Tempels nicht buchstäblich aufzufassen ist, nicht auf den zweiten Tempel unter Josua und Serubabel geht, auch nicht auf einen im Millennium zu errichtenden Tempel, wie die Chilisten schwärmen, sondern eine große, wunderbare Weissagung in allegorischer Form auf den neutestamentlichen Tempel ist, die eine heilige christliche Kirche, die aus der Zeit in die Ewigkeit übergeht. Auch läßt sich erkennen, daß die

1) Bemerkungen von L. Harms, Biblische Einleitung, S. 145.

2) Der jüdische Gelehrte Bunz hat eine besondere Zusammenstellung der dem Hesekiel eigentümlichen Worte gemacht, und Keil in seiner trefflichen und gründlichen „Einleitung in die kanonischen Schriften des Alten Testaments“ füllt eine ganze Seite damit, § 79, 6.

Sprache des Propheten durch gewisse Unregelmäßigkeiten, durch Anomalien und Aramaismen, die späte Zeit der Entstehung des Schriftwerks in den Jahren des Exils und den Aufenthalt des Propheten in der Fremde Babyloniens anzeigen. Doch darf andererseits auch nicht außer acht gelassen werden, daß Hesekiel, wie das bei seinem Berufe als Priester und bei seinem Amte als Prophet, Lehrer und Wächter ganz natürlich ist, sich sehr deutlich an ältere heilige Schriften seines Volkes, besonders an den Pentateuch, anlehnt. Man vergleiche z. B. Kap. 20, 21, wo die Rede ist von den Geboten und Rechten des Herrn, durch die der Mensch lebt, der sie hält, oder Kap. 18, 6—9, wo die Frömmigkeit des Israeliten mit lauter Säcken, die aus dem Pentateuch stammen und später im 15. Psalm wiederkehren, geschildert wird. Diese Verührung mit dem Pentateuch, aber auch die bedeutsame Verschiedenheit von diesem Schriftwerke, daß z. B. in dem Kapitel von den Priestern des neuen Tempels, Kap. 43, kein Hoherpriester erwähnt wird, hat den bekannten Begründer der neueren Pentateuchkritik und Verteidiger der späten nachexilischen Entstehung der mittelpentateuchischen Bücher Wellhausen veranlaßt, Kap. 40—48 als den „Schlüssel“ zum Alten Testamente zu bezeichnen; und der Assyriolog Friedrich Delitzsch, der in seiner Auffassung des Alten Testaments ganz und gar der radical-kritischen Richtung folgt, hat gesagt: „The Book of Ezekiel has become the Archimedean point on which the Pentateuchal criticism has planted itself and from which it has lifted off its hinges the history of worship and literature in Israel as hitherto accepted.“<sup>3)</sup> Deshalb konnte auch der verdiente Apologet des Alten Testaments Robert Dick Wilson von der Hesekielkritik der Neuzeit, die im großen und ganzen das Buch Hesekiel's stehlenläßt, sagen: „His book is the one document of the Old Testament that the critics accept in its entirety, their theories being built largely upon it.“<sup>4)</sup> Und manche der modernen Kritiker nehmen deshalb direkt an, daß Hesekiel der Grundverfasser der lebhaften Teile des Pentateuchs sei und namentlich daß von der modernen Kritik herausgeschälte „Heiligkeitsgesetz“, Holiness Code (H), 3 Mof. 17—26, von ihm herrühre. Auf alle diese kritischen Ansichten gehen wir aber hier nicht näher ein, da uns dies von unserer nächsten Aufgabe zu weit abführen würde.

Wenn wir uns nun dem Buche selbst zuwenden, so tritt uns sofort dessen planvolle Gestalt, die lichtvolle Anordnung und die klare Disposition entgegen, die eine Inhaltsangabe sehr erleichtert. Ganz richtig haben auch neuere Kritiker geurteilt, daß Hesekiel eine „architektonische Persönlichkeit“ und sein Buch ein so vollendetes Kunstwerk sei, wie wir es im Alten Testamente nur noch in Hiob besitzen. Wir erkennen sofort, daß das Buch in zwei große Hauptteile zerfällt, und jeder dieser Haupt-

3) Princeton Theological Review, 20, 399. 661.

4) A. a. O., 17, 412.

teile hat wieder zwei Unterabteilungen. Im ersten Teile finden sich Gerichtsverkündigungen, Kap. 1—32, und diese Gerichtsreden ergehen zuerst über Jerusalem, Kap. 1—24, und sodann über sieben Heidenvölker, Kap. 25—32. Der zweite Teil bringt sodann Heilsverkündigungen und Trostreden, und zwar Kap. 33—39 zeitgeschichtliche und messianische und Kap. 40—48 die prophetische Schilderung des neuen Tempels und was damit zusammenhängt.

Es ist aber vielleicht nicht überflüssig, wenn wir ganz kurz von Kapitel zu Kapitel in eigenen Worten mit freier Anlehnung an Thilos „Alttestamentliche Bibelkunde“ und andere Werke eine Übersicht über den Inhalt des Buches geben. Wir halten die Kapitelüberschriften in unserer deutschen und englischen Bibel, obwohl sie vielfach übersehen werden, wahrlich nicht für eine unnötige Beigabe, sondern aus langjährigen Bibelstudien haben wir immer erkannt, wie wertvoll für das Verständnis eines Buches eine kurze Inhaltsangabe der einzelnen Kapitel und Abschnitte ist. Vielleicht wird auch der eine oder andere Leser dadurch veranlaßt, gerade jetzt den Propheten Hesekiel seiner täglichen kursorischen Bibellektüre, die auch kein Theolog unterlassen darf, zu grunde zu legen. So finden wir gleich in der Einleitung zu den Gerichtsreden über Jerusalem, die Kap. 1, 1—3, 22 steht, bedeutsame Aneutungen über Amt und Aufgabe des Propheten. Dem Hesekiel erscheint die Herrlichkeit des Herrn über den Cherubim, Kap. 1, und dieser Herr beruft ihn dann zum Propheten, damit er dem abtrünnigen Volk, dem „ungehorsamen Haus“, predige, Kap. 2. Hier liegt schon eine Kennzeichnung der Eigenart seines prophetischen Zeugnisses: den harten Köpfen der Juden steht er eine harte Predigt entgegen. Kap. 3 zeigt dann in der Rede von dem Brief, den der Prophet essen muß, wie die harten Reden, die er halten soll, ihm von Gott eingegeben sind. Und hierauf wird er nach siebentägigem Schweigen zum Wächter über das Haus Israel bestellt und ihm die Verantwortung für das Seelenheil seiner Hörer aufgelegt. Dann beginnen die einzelnen Reden. Kap. 4 wird in symbolischen Handlungen die bevorstehende Belagerung Jerusalems Sinnbildlich dargestellt, und Kap. 5 wird angekündigt, wie verschwindend die Zahl derer ist, die bei dem Strafgericht über Jerusalem übrigbleiben. Kap. 6 schildert die Verwüstung des Landes, aber zugleich wird darauf hingewiesen, wie von dem geringen Rest, der übrigbleibt, sich doch etliche bekehren und im Unglück zur Reue über ihre Bosheit kommen würden.

Nun folgt ein zweiter Abschnitt, der Kap. 8—19 umfaßt. Kap. 8 versetzt uns in das folgende Jahr; vgl. V. 1 mit Kap. 1, 2. Der Prophet wird auf wunderbare Weise in den Tempel zu Jerusalem entrückt und schaut dort den Greuel des Gögendiensstes. Er sieht hierauf in Kap. 9 sechs Männer erscheinen, die das zukünftige Gericht darstellen. Sie füllen die Stadt mit Erschlagenen und verschonen nur diejenigen, die über ihre Sünden Leid tragen, nachdem sie vorher von einem der sechs

Männer gekennzeichnet worden waren. Kap. 10 muß der Mann, der die zu Verschonenden gekennzeichnet hat, von dem Feuer unter den Cherubim nehmen und es auf die Stadt streuen; und dann wendet sich die Erscheinung der Herrlichkeit des Herrn dem Osttor zu, um anzugeben, daß sie den Tempel verlässe und der Gott Israels damit dem widerspenstigen Volle seine Gnadengegenwart entziehe. Kap. 11 sieht der Prophet fünfundzwanzig Männer am Osttor des Tempels, denen er das Verbergen ankündigen muß, weil sie den unseligen Gedanken haben, daß das Unglück nicht so bald kommen werde. Einen dieser Männer sieht er plötzlich sterben; aber als er darüber erschrocken ausruft: „Ah, Herr, Herr, du wirst's mit den übrigen Israels gar ausmachen!“ V. 13, wird ihm gesagt, daß die bereits Weggefährten mit einem neuen Geist und einem neuen Herzen zurückkehren werden. So finden sich immer Lichtblitze im Dunkel. Und dann kehrt der Prophet zu den Gefangenen am Wasser Chebar zurück und teilt ihnen mit, was er geschraut hat.

Nun werden die Gerichtsreden an die Gefangenen fortgesetzt. Kap. 12 schildert sinnbildlich die nutzlose Flucht des letzten Königs Zedekia bei der Eroberung der Stadt. Kap. 13 folgt eine Rede gegen die falschen Propheten und Prophetinnen und Kap. 14 eine Strafrede gegen die, welche zwar den Propheten nach dem Worte Gottes fragen, aber im Grunde ein gökendienerisches Herz haben. Er zeigt, daß das Gericht über Jerusalem auch durch die frömmsten Männer, und wären es Noah, Daniel und Hiob, nicht aufgehalten werden kann. Kap. 15 werden die Einwohner Jerusalems mit einem abgeschnittenen Rebholz verglichen, das zu nichts mehr nütze ist, und Kap. 16 wird gezeigt, daß Jerusalem nicht besser ist als die benachbarten Heidenvölker, die Kanaaniter, Amoriter und Hethiter. Der Herr hat sich seiner erbarmt, wie man sich eines Windelkindes erbarmt, und hat es großgezogen, aber da wurde es zu einer geistlichen Erzhure und buhlte mit den Heidenvölkern. Wie wird sich Juda schämen, wenn Jehovah ihm, wie es am Schlus, V. 63, heißt, „alles vergeben“ wird! Auch Kap. 17 ist eine Gleichnisrede, wenn auch mehr politischer Art. Ein Adler — und damit ist der Chaldäer oder Babylonier gemeint — nahm den Wipfel der Zeder des Libanon, des jüdischen Königshauses, brach das oberste Reis ab — das war der vorletzte jüdische König Joachin — und brachte es nach Babel. Dann pflanzte er an seine Stelle einen Weinstock, das bedeutet den letzten König, Zedekia; aber der wandte sich Ägypten zu, und dafür wird ihm das Ende bereitet werden. Jedoch auch hier schließt die Rede mit einer kurzen herrlichen Verheißung, V. 22—24. Das zarte Reis ist der König Messias aus Davids Stamm. Kap. 18 hebt hervor, daß es nicht Gottes Absicht sei, jemanden um der Sünden der Väter willen zu vernichten, sondern durch wahre Buße jeden zu retten. Der gnädige, barmherzige Gott hat keinen Gefallen am Tode des Gottlosen. Aber Kap. 19 enthält eine Wehklage über die Löwin, die zwei junge Löwen großzieht, von denen der eine nach

Ägypten, der andere nach Babel geführt wird. Diese Löwin war die Königin Hamutal, die Mutter der Könige Joachas-Sallum, 2 Kön. 23, 31, und Zedekia, 2 Kön. 24, 18.

Kap. 20—23 bilden sodann die letzte Gruppe der Gerichtsreden über Jerusalem. Zunächst wird Kap. 20 den Ältesten, die den Propheten nach dem Worte des Herrn fragen, die ganze Abgötterei Israels seit dem Auszuge aus Ägypten vorgehalten und das Gericht angekündigt; und nach Kap. 21 ist das Schwert gegen Juda schon geweht. Nebukadnezar steht am Scheideweg, V. 21, und schlägt den Weg nach Jerusalem ein; denn Jerusalem steht nach Kap. 22 wegen seiner greulichen Sünden unter dem Banne Gottes, scheut vor keiner Schändlichkeit mehr zurück, ist erfüllt mit Ungerechtigkeit, die zum Himmel schreit. Dies wird dann Kap. 23 in der früher, Nr. 1, S. 25, behandelten Bildrede ausführlich dargestellt; und zum Schluss wird dem Propheten Kap. 24 kundgetan, daß Nebukadnezar jetzt mit der Belagerung der Stadt begonnen hat. Die belagerte Stadt erscheint unter demilde eines vollen, unreinen Kessels, unter dem Feuer angezündet wird. Hesekels Frau wird ihm an diesem Tage durch den Tod entrissen — es war der zehnte Tag des zehnten Monats im neunten Jahre seit der Wegführung Joachins, wohl das Jahr 589 oder 588 —, und er darf keine Totenlage halten. Gerade so verlieren die Juden die Lust ihrer Augen, und keine Tränen bleiben ihnen dafür bei dem allgemeinen Unglück. Von da an verstummt der Prophet; er hat seinem Volke gleichsam nichts mehr zu sagen, bis das Gericht vollzogen ist, Kap. 33, 21. Aber inzwischen ergehen die Reden über die heidnischen Völker, Kap. 25—32. Manche von ihnen stammen wohl aus späterer Zeit, sind aber hier eingefügt im Interesse der sachlichen Anordnung.

Solche Gerichtsweissagungen über die Heidenvölker werden nach Kap. 25 gegen Ammon, Moab, Edom und gegen die Philister gerichtet, lauter alte Feinde des Gottesvolkes, die drei Erstgenannten mit ihm verwandt, die aber wegen ihrer Schadenfreude über Israels Unglück und wegen ihrer nachbarlichen Feindseligkeit, wie sie sich namentlich bei den Philistern immer zeigte, in Gottes Gericht fallen. Besonders wird dann auch den Phöniziern und ihrer Hauptstadt Thrus Kap. 26 die Strafe angekündigt, die Kap. 27 in einem Klagelied über Thrus gipfelt, das zu den bemerkenswertesten poetischen Abschnitten des Alten Testaments gehört. Der Prophet malt in seiner eigenartigen Weise, wie diese Königin der Meere, die den Handel der ganzen damaligen Welt in Händen hatte, mit all ihrer Schönheit und ihrem Reichtum ins Meer sinkt, was sich auch unter Alexander dem Großen erfüllt hat. Und Kap. 28 enthält dann ein Klagelied über den Fürsten der Stadt Thrus, der wegen des Stolzes der Stadt ins Verderben gerät; und am Ende wird auch Sidon, der älteren Phönizierhauptstadt, der Fall vorausgesagt; eine tröstliche Verheißung, V. 25. 26, bildet den Schluss. Kap. 29—32 bringen die Gerichtsweissagungen über Ägypten, den zerbrechlichen

Nohrstab, auf den sich Israel stützte, der ihm jedoch in die Schulter und in die Hüften führ. Den Schluß in dem leitgenannten Kapitel macht ein in fünf Strophen sich bewegendes Gräblied über Ägypten und seinen König Pharaos; wie die alte Weltmacht Assur und andere Völker wird es in die Grube fahren.

Hier dürfte wohl auch einmal die Frage aufgeworfen und kurz beantwortet werden, die schon manchem Bibelleser und Bibelforscher aufgestoßen ist und etwas Schwierigkeit bereitet hat: Warum haben die Propheten Israels so viel gegen die Heidenvölker geredet, so daß diese Reden bei den großen Propheten ganze große Abschnitte bilden und bei den kleinen Propheten bisweilen fast die ganzen Bücher ausmachen, vgl. z. B. Jes. 18—23, Jer. 46—51 und die Bücher Obadjas, Nahums und Habakufs? Darauf ist zu antworten, daß eben dies mit zur Aufgabe der Propheten gehörte. Während die früheren Propheten, wie Samuel, Nathan, Elia und Elisa, sich hauptsächlich mit den inneren Angelegenheiten des Volkes Gottes befassen, haben die späteren Propheten ein umfassenderes Thema. Je mehr das Volk Gottes mit den großen damaligen Weltmächten sich einläßt, desto mehr wachsen auch diese Weltmächte nach Gottes Plan und Absicht als Zuchtruten für sein Volk heran, die ihm auch fülliglich den Untergang bereiten. Und obwohl die Heidenvölker darin Strafwerkzeuge Gottes sind, so werden sie doch selbst mit Recht für ihre an Israel verübten Greuel gestraft. Israel ist Gottes Eigentumsvolk; wer es antastet, der tastet seinen Augapfel an, Sach. 2, 8. Aber dabei darf vor allem nicht außer acht gelassen werden, daß gerade durch die furchtbaren Strafgerichte über die Heidenvölker, wie sie aus Schrift und Geschichte bekannt sind, das neutestamentliche Heil für die Heidenwelt angebahnt wurde. Die Weltmächte mußten gebrochen und in Trümmer zerschlagen werden, ehe diese Völkerschaften der Predigt des Evangeliums zugänglich werden konnten, Dan. 2, 44. Das Heil, das neutestamentliche Heil, ist das Ende aller Wege Gottes zur alttestamentlichen Zeit. Daraum laufen auch so oft diese erschütternden Gerichtsreden aus in Verkündigungen von der Befreiung der Heiden; vgl. z. B. Jes. 19: Zerstörung und Befreiung der Ägypter; Zeph. 2, 11; Sach. 9. Und wie in den ersten christlichen Jahrhunderten die Kirche in Ägypten blühte, ist aus der Geschichte bekannt; das Ausstreben der Hände Mohnenlands zu Gott („Kusch [Äthiopien] läßt eilen seine Hände zu Gott“, Ps. 68, 32) wurde eingeleitet durch den Kämmerer der Königin Candace, Apost. 8, 26—39; und daß gerade auch das von Hesekiel so furchtbar bedrohte Thrus schon zu Pauli Zeit ein Christengemeindlein hatte, zeigt Apost. 21, 8—6. —

Aber nun ändert sich das Bild. Hat Hesekiel in diesen zweiunddreißig Kapiteln, wie schon früher angemerkt ist, destruktiv gewirkt und niedergerissen, so wird er jetzt konstruktiv und baut auf. Denn nun beginnen die besonderen, ganz herrlichen Trostreden und Heilsverkündigungen. Kap. 33 lesen wir zunächst die Rede von der Pflicht der geist-

lichen Wächter, ähnlich wie wir eine solche Ausführung schon zu Anfang der Wirksamkeit des Propheten gefunden haben, Kap. 3, 16—21. Daran schließt sich die Zusicherung der Gerechtigkeit und Güte des Herrn gegen das Volk, wenn es sich von seiner Sünde zu ihm bekehrt, V. 11. Und dann wird berichtet, wie schon am Vorabend des Tages, an dem der Bote kam, der den Fall Jerusalems verkündigte, Hesekiel der Mund aufgetan wurde zu den Trostreden, V. 21. 22. Kap. 34 folgt die wunderbar schöne Trostrede von dem guten Hirten im Gegensatz zu den untreuen Hirten Israels, die die Herde nicht geweidet haben, den gottlosen Regenten. Dieser Hirte ist der Knecht David, V. 23. 24, der König Messias, der rechte gute Hirte, das Gegenbild der falschen Hirten, wie wir, wenn wir dieses Kapitel später zu besonderer Erörterung herausgreifen, klar erkennen werden.

Nach einer nochmaligen Weissagung im 35. Kapitel gegen Edom, den schadenfrohen Feind Israels, hebt sich wieder Kap. 36 als besonders wichtig heraus. Den Bergen Israels wird Heil und Segen verheißen, Israel wird seinen Feinden und Hassern gegenüber gerechtfertigt, und vor allem wird ihm ein neues Herz gegeben werden. Das ist die wichtige Stelle, die mit Recht als ein Sitz der Lehre von der Bekehrung angesehen und bis auf den heutigen Tag als solcher benutzt wird. Und diese ergreifende Gnadenverheißung erreicht ihren Höhepunkt im 37. Kapitel mit der Rede von dem Felde voller Totengebeine, die wieder zum Leben kommen. Wieder ein ganz einzigartiges Kapitel, das je und je, schon von Tertullian in seiner Schrift *De Resurrectione Carnis*,<sup>5)</sup> herausgegriffen und als ein Muster gewaltiger Sprache bezeichnet worden ist. Der Prophet sieht da die Herstellung Israels aus namenlosem Sündenverderben; aber in perspektivischem prophetischem Blick verbindet sich damit unter Erneuerung der messianischen Weissagung, V. 24, die Auferstehung des Fleisches am Ende der Tage. Und dazu paßt, daß dann in Kap. 38 und 39 der letzte Ansturm der Feinde der Kirche, Gog und Magog, vorgeführt wird, die Gott aber zu nützen machen, woraufhin er seiner Kirche den Sieg verleihen wird. Auch diese beiden schwierigen und sehr verschiedenen erklärteten Kapitel sollen später zu besonderer Behandlung herausgegriffen werden.

In Kap. 40—48 folgt endlich das merkwürdige Gesicht von dem neuen Heiligtum und seinen Ordnungen, die Weissagung von der neu-testamentlichen Kirche unter demilde eines Tempels. Und zwar wird Kap. 40—42 der Tempel geschildert in seinen einzelnen Teilen, Kap. 43 die Weihe des Tempels, Kap. 44 die Diener des Heiligtums, Kap. 45 und 46 die Opfer und Kap. 47 und 48 das Heilige Land. Aber auch diese Vision, alles in allem genommen das größte und wunderbarste Gesicht der ganzen Heiligen Schrift, wollen wir später noch besonders betrachten.

L. Fürbringer

5) Kap. 29—31.

## Justification, Sanctification, and Stewardship in Their Aims and Relation to Each Other

Essay read before the Pastoral Conference of the Western District  
of the Missouri Synod, October, 1935

### XVI

Now we come to the consideration of *stewardship*. Stewardship consists in our being entrusted with certain resources concerning the use of which we have received instructions from the Owner and have to render an account. The *Standard Dictionary* says: "A steward is a person entrusted with the management of estates or affairs not his own." You cannot be a steward without being in charge of something. At the same time, our being a steward implies that we are not the owners of that which is placed in our care. Factors to be considered are the owner, the property in question, the steward, his administration, and the account that must be rendered.

### XVII

The word *stewardship* is not used in the Bible in inculcating those lessons which we have been considering. It is found in the Scriptures, but with reference to secular affairs. Cf. Luke 16, 2 (*oikonomia*). The noun *stewards* is found in the New Testament a few times in the sense in which we employ it here, but chiefly in speaking of pastors. 1 Cor. 4, 1 Paul speaks of the called servants of the Lord as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Titus 1, 7: "A bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God." Of a different nature is 1 Pet. 4, 10, where spiritual gifts are pointed to which are bestowed both on pastors and hearers: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." The Greek word in all these instances is *oikonomos*, a person entrusted with the management of a house. That pastors have this appellation given to them very particularly should fill them with a sense of their responsibility in the same degree as it should make them mindful of having become recipients of a high honor.

### XVIII

The relation between sanctification and stewardship is that the former is the wider term, including the latter. The dividing-line is hard to draw, and we need not quarrel with those who identify sanctification and stewardship. The distinction between the two concepts is that stewardship, as we employ the word, pertains to the use we make of what God has endowed us with,

while sanctification, besides pertaining to such use, refers to the state we are in. Stewardship looks to what we do; sanctification embraces in addition our receiving and enjoying the gifts of God. It will be difficult to find a place in the concept of stewardship for such ideas as the fear of God, trust in the Savior, the hope of heaven, and still these undeniably belong to what we term sanctification. Looking at the matter from another point of view, let us think of Bible-reading. Is it an act of stewardship when I read the Holy Scriptures? Primarily not. I am there receiving what God is offering me. Regarded differently, it might be called stewardship, because there is involved here the use which I make of the time placed at my disposal, and no one will deny that, when I am reading the Holy Scriptures, I am making good use of my time. What is important is not so much a precise classification of stewardship as the practise of it.

### XIX

The Owner, or Master, we have in mind when we speak of Christian stewardship is God, our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. This is a very self-evident truth; we dwell on it for a minute, however, to remind ourselves that the Scriptures contain many references to it. In the parables of the Pounds and of the Talents it is Jesus who entrusts goods to His servants and afterwards makes them render an account. How mightily the words of Ps. 24, 1 ring out: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein!" When David and his people made offerings for the Temple to be built, he said, 1 Chron. 29, 14: "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." St. Paul levels all haughty, conceited, self-exalting notions to the ground, saying, 1 Cor. 4, 7: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" The view that we ourselves are owners of the things mentioned is one of the sad delusions of our own sinful nature, which must be counteracted, opposed, and suppressed.

What tremendous, infinite claims God has upon us is brought out in the titles given Him by all Christians, calling Him Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, Sanctifier, to mention but a few fundamental ones furnished by consideration of the Apostles' Creed. The list could be easily extended. If we are dilatory, self-seeking, indolent stewards, it is because we do not vividly realize the majesty and goodness of our Master.

## XX

The stewards are the Christians, all of them, without exception, not merely the ministers; for the words of St. Peter "Ye are a chosen generation . . . that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" are spoken to all Christians; not merely to the wealthy, for the readers of the apostle just referred to numbered many penniless slaves in their midst; not merely to the prominent and influential, for the Christians in Corinth who were exhorted to make the proper use of their possessions in the great chapters on giving, 2 Cor. 8 and 9, are said by the apostle to belong chiefly to the lowly and despised. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called," 1 Cor. 1, 26. Is the child going to school, the mother tied down by numberless household duties, the tottering grandfather, a steward? If they are Christians, then we should not hesitate to give them that title; for it is certain that some means and opportunities for service have been given to them. The universality of this status we should preach with joyous power.

## XXI

The property in question is equally comprehensive. It consists of all the material, physical, mental, and spiritual endowments and the opportunities for service God has given to us. We must here not think merely of the wheat and corn of the farmer, the pay envelope of the mechanic, and the monthly check of the professional man, but also of the eloquence of the political speaker and legal pleader, the poetic abilities of the literary artist, the pictures of the painter, the acute reasoning of the logical thinker, the knowledge and skill of the physician, the Biblical understanding of teachers and pupils in Christian day-schools and Sunday-schools. All these possessions or endowments are included here as well as the diamond necklaces of our society dames and the lovely flowers gracing their rock gardens. How easy it is to utter these words! And how quickly one can construct logical, flawless arguments to prove them true; but how difficult to make them live and powerful, moving the hearts! That every time an opportunity for doing a good work and making a statement of our faith offers itself our position as Christian stewards is pressing its claims upon us, that every hour marked by the striking of our faithful clock is put into the great ledger of the Master as one of the assets of the estate for which the steward will be held responsible,—how much we ministers preach these truths, but how little we succeed in regulating our own lives and those of our parishioners according to them!

## XXII

The comprehensiveness of stewardship is not sufficiently realized. It is usually held to refer to our money. What a sad error not to see that it refers to all other resources as well. The limitation mentioned has an unfavorable reaction even in the sphere of Mammon. We Christians are stewards, *wir sind Haushalter*, is a statement most of our congregation-members have heard repeatedly from their pastors. What does it mean to them? We cannot read *their* hearts, but we can read our own, and the usual meaning attached to these words is that we ought to make the right use of our money. That is chiefly the reaction which is produced. There is a quick mental check-up on the cash in the family till and on the amount still left in the bank, some rapid calculation maneuvers in which division and subtraction figure prominently, and the subject is dismissed. The person who does not see that *all* his resources and he himself belong to the Lord takes a low view of stewardship. As a result, even in that sphere in which he acknowledges himself to be a steward his efforts will be half-hearted and his attacks on Mammon lacking in earnestness and vigor. Think of what a mighty army our Synod would be if all its members were fully aware of their status as stewards and willing to put all their resources, physical, mental, spiritual, into the service of their heavenly King. Imperfect beings as we are, we can never reach such a blessed stage of understanding and resolve for God-pleasing, united activity here on earth, but we should strive for improvement in this respect. That all our gifts here have to be thought of is clear from 1 Pet. 4,10 ("as good stewards of the *manifold, poikiles, grace of God*").

## XXIII

Special attention should be called to our possession, as individuals and as a church-body, of the unadulterated Word and Sacraments. What an indescribably rich treasure and resource they constitute! Among all the things entrusted to us Christians as stewards the means of grace are the chief ones. If we were not so accustomed to having them, we should find it most amazing that we poor mortals hold in our hands such heavenly, divinely powerful, life-bestowing gifts. Our personal equipment one might liken to the poles and wires and switchboards of an electric system, and we cannot help thinking of it that besides the conductive material, alas! many self-installed insulators are found. But the dynamo which sends the heavenly current to its destination is not a human quality or accomplishment or instrument, but the Word and the Sacraments. Every now and then the wires are down; the conductors are not functioning; we are bad stewards. If

a church-body which has very hazy and erroneous views on the nature of the Word and the Sacraments is not much concerned in utilizing these treasures, if it, for instance, regards the Word merely as informing us on the great acts of God in our behalf and the Sacraments as symbolical of divine blessings, and does not believe that they convey to, and confer upon, us the Holy Spirit with all His gifts and benefits, it is not surprising that such a church-body is not intensely interested in bringing people in touch with these means, but relies chiefly on an appeal to reason and to the emotions, on exciting meetings and so-called revivals. But how Lutherans, holding in all sincerity the exalted doctrines about the Word and the Sacraments which our Church has always taught, believing them to be the hand of the heavenly Physician with which He touches the dead heart and makes it beat in true faith,—how Lutherans can be remiss and slow in placing these means at the disposal of their fellow-men, is from a purely logical point of view quite incomprehensible.

Another aspect of this matter should not be overlooked. Recognizing the importance of the means of grace, our Church has very properly always insisted on purity of doctrine and the administration of the Sacraments according to the institution of Christ. One cannot escape the conclusion that this insistence must be matched by an equally intense realization of the import of the saying of Jesus "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more," Luke 12, 48. If we are satisfied with the mere possession of these treasures and do not acknowledge the stewardship involved, we are indeed in the toils of dead orthodoxy. It is incumbent on every one of us to examine himself whether he, either consciously or unconsciously, is a victim of this disease.

#### XXIV

If Christian ministers and laymen suffer from an inferiority complex, it is largely due to this, that they lose sight of their high standing and endowments as stewards of God.—That frequently in Christian circles the inferiority complex is in evidence cannot be denied. It was characteristic of the attitude of the disciples of Jesus when they hid behind closed doors for fear of the Jews. It manifests itself in cases where our religion is attacked and a defense should be made; but the critic is not answered because of a feeling of littleness, of insignificance, which paralyzes our courage and ties our tongue. The German Lutheran poet Benjamin Schmolck probably did not know the term under discussion, but he knew that which it signifies, as is clear from these well-known lines of his: —

Ist mein Fleisch und Blut verzagt,  
Will die Welt die Zunge binden,  
Werd' ich hin und her gejagt  
Wie ein leichtes Rohr von Winden,  
Wenn Verfolgung auf mich stoesst,  
Ach, so mache mich getrost! (Hymn 267, 4.)

When such a feeling governs our course of action, we simply fail to bear in mind the true nature of what we are and what we have. We are putting too low an estimate on our Master's goods. That one Christian standing up for Jesus constitutes a majority regardless of how large the meeting or assembly is which he attends; that, "if God be for us," no one can successfully be against us; that we offer the world not cheap tinsel, but the pearl of great price, to own which every human being should be willing to sell everything he possesses; that as Christians we are priests and kings and have a higher dignity than any which this world can offer,—all this we must not permit ourselves to forget in order to be faithful in our position as stewards.

#### XXV

The empty treasuries of the Church are silent, but eloquent witnesses that the question of stewardship is not fully understood. There was one time in the history of the Church when the treasuries were not empty. Alas, one has the feeling that it was the only time that this much-desired situation obtained. I am thinking of the situation immediately after the founding of the Church. "Neither was there any among them that lacked," says the Sacred Record, Acts 4, 34, and it continues: "For as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold." As a rule, however, the treasuries of the Church have suffered from anemia, and now our church officials hardly know what a healthy-looking exchequer might resemble. The diagnosis is simple and does not require specialists. The conviction that we are the stewards of our Lord's goods is not sufficiently potent. The treasuries of the Church certainly are clinical thermometers, showing by their figures what attitude is taken by us toward the obligations we have as Christian stewards. It is true, no physician would be guided in his study of a case exclusively by the readings of the thermometer; so we do not wish to be understood as saying that the condition of the Church's treasuries alone is an adequate gage of the view our people are taking of their position as Christian stewards. But it is one great factor to be considered. Since it is possible for many of our church-members to purchase one new car after the other, to take expensive pleasure trips hither and thither, to keep fairly well abreast of the procession bringing out new radios, to furnish their

homes in a style that would have made their grandfathers and grandmothers think of royalty, and since at the same time the treasuries of the Church are terrifyingly emaciated and the physicians frantically prescribe blood transfusions, known in the technical, cold, unpoetical language of the experts as financial drives, it cannot be denied that there is something wrong with the understanding of the question of stewardship obtaining in our circles. Just where the fault lies we shall discuss a little later. Now I merely wish to say that a high standard of living on the part of the stewards, on the one hand, and the languishing of their Master's work, on the other, are two incompatible ideas, constituting a flat, absolute contradiction, which unmistakably points to unfaithfulness on their part.

## XXVI

The so-called "idle-candidate situation" is universally lamented. That these unemployed brethren constitute a grand opportunity for our Church, a valuable resource, an asset, and not a liability, is largely overlooked.—It is not necessary to furnish proof that the lamentations referred to are not fictitious. Undoubtedly there are but few of us who have not given utterance to them or listened sympathetically when others indulged in such strains. I am not at all planning to belittle the feelings of disappointment, anxiety, and worry besetting the hearts of those involved. But as a Church we should not forget that we have now finally reached the stage of development which we were desirous of attaining, where instead of a dearth of candidates we have a generous supply and can really start an intelligent, well-articulated, and well-balanced forward movement, not being compelled to fear that as the attack is launched there will be no reserves to draw into gaps which may unexpectedly arise. It is a happy situation, generally speaking. Why groan? There is something wrong, of course. There is a lack of something vital. What is lacking is the conviction in us as church-members that we are stewards of this resource and should make good, profitable use of it. Imagine that you are the steward or superintendent of a large farm where a most bountiful crop has grown on the fields, to harvest which your available help is entirely inadequate. Then suddenly the owner of the farm sends you a dozen able-bodied workers to supply your need. Will you frown upon their arrival and wish they had not come? "Ah, Mr. Essayist," you may say, "there is a phase which you have forgotten to include in your illustration, but which must not be omitted if the parable is to hold. You have failed to mention that the new workers have to be fed and that the supply of ham and eggs and apple-butter is entirely insufficient for the increased force. What have you to say?"

"Well," I reply, "on the face of it it is not likely that the owner will order a dozen hands out to his farm without knowing what the kitchen and pantry can afford. And, furthermore, he in all probability knows of some secret supplies which the steward is keeping for his own benefit and which he, the owner, expects to be produced now." That we, living as we do, in comparative ease and comfort, are unable to employ the candidates at our disposal and to give them food and raiment, is something which we ought not try to make ourselves believe because it simply is not true. There is not a lack of the necessary means, but of the willingness to place what we have in our Master's service which needs bemoaning.

### XXVII

The ineffectiveness of our ministry often results from a wrong view on our part touching the stewardship of our congregation-members. — What I have in mind here is that the pastor is not sufficiently aware of the stewardship status which belongs to every one of his congregation-members and that he works and hurries, puffs and pants, as if he were the only one whom the Head of the Church has meant to be a steward in that group of Christians. It is to be feared that at times we overlook the truly grand resources which our congregations possess in the various gifts and talents of their members and which the consecration and devotion of the latter gladly place in the Master's service if an opportunity offers. Must really the fence of sick Mr. Jones periodically be repaired just by the pastor? Is he the only one in the congregation that can place the stamps on the four hundred envelopes containing the monthly or the quarterly letter addressed to the members? Let no one think that I mean to say that the pastor should consistently refuse to milk invalid Mr. Smith's cow or to help take the coal of a poor woman from the sidewalk into the basement. Such things may become imperative, and no minister should consider himself too important a personage for the performance of such menial tasks. But let him bear in mind that his church-members are stewards, too. If he succeeds in making his church a church of workers, what great significance will not that have for the advancement of the cause! It must be borne in mind, too, that, if certain members of the body are never given a chance to function, they become atrophied and finally lose all usefulness. If St. Paul were in our midst, he would probably ask us to open our New Testaments at 1 Cor. 12 and read what he through inspiration of the Holy Spirit wrote many years ago, v. 14 ff.: "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?" etc. And v. 20: "But now are they many members, but one body."

## XXVIII

Hindrances to a full life of stewardship are many, among them selfishness, fear of men, and worldliness. It will help us if we realize that the difficulties have their origin not so much in the head as in the heart. — That in our stewardship endeavors we all, pastors as well as parishioners, fall short of the ideal, requires no demonstration, because it is simply a part of the general state of imperfection to which we quite unreservedly, and perhaps more glibly than sorrowfully, acknowledge to be subject. But it is worth anybody's time, in fact, he owes it to his God, his Church, and himself, to determine what factors are most potent in keeping him from reaching the goal in order that he may counteract their harmful influence. Diagnosis is a highly important process when we are dealing with ailments, be they bodily, mental, or spiritual. In letting the destructive legions pass before us in review, we notice there are a few centurions or sergeants that look taller and more formidable than others: selfishness, fear of men, and worldliness. When we see the members of our Church who, generally speaking, like other Americans, are enterprising, clever, resourceful, establish homes for themselves, advance in business, capture their share of the slowly returning prosperity, and still contribute on an average not even five cents a week for the work of the Church apart from the requirements of the local congregation, we cannot but raise the charge of selfishness. We here in the United States are enjoying a remarkably high standard of living, a standard which is the envy of European nations. But that is all that can be said; we are enjoying it, and there the matter ends. — The fear of men is likewise given a special mention here. Popularity rather than loyalty to the master's interests is the thing the thought of which fills the soul; to remain on good terms with friends and neighbors whom a frank profession of one's religious convictions might offend and alienate is in the opinion of many more important than to see to it that the estate entrusted to their superintendence grows and flourishes. Very similar to these sinister forces is worldliness, saying, and at times shouting, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. Of its all too successful ravages among the stewards of our Lord, its sly, often unobtrusive, insidious methods, deceiving its victims into believing that they can serve two masters, the unblushing audacity it frequently manifests when it enters the house of the Lord, and by means of bazaars and lotteries and raffles tries to spread its antistewardship poison, it is not necessary here to say much; he that runneth may read if he is not blind.

We ought to see that what is ailing the Church is not so much lack of information on the proper technique of proving ourselves stewards of Jesus Christ as hesitancy and refusal to follow the

light we have. Instruction, giving information on the work of the Church, its mission-fields and schools, its charities and its machinery, are indeed indispensable. Moreover, the guidance furnished us in the Scriptures for leading a life of true service must often be brought before our people. But one cannot escape the conclusion, when studying the affairs in our Church, that more than the head the heart is at fault. What we must overcome chiefly are the inertia and opposition of the will. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Instruction on the best methods of testifying and the most approved systems of giving is useful and even necessary, but it is what the road map is to the auto tourist. What he needs more than maps and charts and hints about roads is the gasoline with its constant explosions — holy determination created by the fire of the Spirit of God. Let our prayer be that God may make our words sledgehammers, breaking the opposition of the will of the Old Adam in our parishioners when the call to faithful stewardship goes forth. If the hearts are aflame with the desire to follow and serve Christ, the introduction of proper methods will not cause much difficulty.

### XXIX

Our teaching on stewardship has been blessed. If the blessings have not been so visible and impressive as we expected them to be, we ought to examine ourselves whether we probably fell into legalism when discussing the subject, whether we neglected to give it the proper emphasis, whether we lacked in courage in portraying the needs of the Savior's work, and especially whether we entered upon this phase of our teaching in a spirit of bravado, with reliance on our own powers and with motives of self-glorification or with a prayerful heart, in due humility, seeking nothing but the glory of our Redeemer and the Salvation of souls. — In speaking to each other about the teaching on the subject of stewardship, which is ever our task as Christian ministers, we should not give way to pessimism and chant nothing but dirges and lamentations. It is evident that past efforts in our church-body have not been in vain. Whether you think of what was accomplished by the fathers or of experiences in our more recent history, for instance, the great success which attended our endeavors in 1924, we have been furnished evidence that instruction on stewardship does not represent wasted efforts. But it is true, we have not, generally speaking, reached the heights which we wished to scale and which probably in our early ministry we thought would be reached, in the prodigious efforts with which we intended to amaze the world. There have been failures; and as I mentally check all the renowned and unrenowned divines that I have ever known, I cannot find

a single one that has made a perfect score in this respect. Undoubtedly it will be wholesome for every one of us to conduct a private investigation of how he performed his duties as a teacher of Christian stewardship. Was he legalistic in his methods? Did he think the Law would make the hearts generous and loving? Did his hearers get the impression that he was pleading for selfish reasons instead of perceiving that the love of Christ was constraining him? Then he should ask himself whether he probably did not fail to do justice to the subject on account of an ill-founded belief that a brief reference to the topic now and then was all that was needed. It may be, too, that he brought this matter before the Church in a very apologetic fashion, with much diffidence, excusing himself for being so ungentlemanly and rude as to speak to enlightened folks on a subject so threadbare, on the one hand, and so personal and intimate, on the other. Or, again, he may have come upon the congregation with this topic like a whirlwind, dashing, terrifying, with much self-confidence and little evidence of humility, a sort of blustering Goliath, evincing the *Veni-vidi-vici* attitude of a certain dictator, appearing on the scene like a conqueror, visualizing in advance the laurel wreaths which, he expected, would soon adorn his temples and departing, alas! conquered, disappointed, and crestfallen. For much as we may admire his courage and pluck, it is eternally true that "the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong," Eccl. 9, 11, and: "The Lord delighteth not in the strength of the horse; He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy," Ps. 147, 10, 11. It is along lines of this nature that our self-examination may proceed, and perhaps it will aid us in avoiding mistakes which we unwittingly made in the past.

### XXX

The aims of Christian stewardship are the same as those of sanctification. We seek, next to the glory of God, the spreading of the kingdom of Christ. See the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer. The Christian steward must realize that the social gospel is no Gospel. — When we ponder our position as Christian stewards, quite naturally its objectives, its aims and purposes, will be thought about. What do we strive for as Christian stewards? What are our ultimate aims? Since stewardship is merely a part of sanctification, the aims of the former are necessarily included in the aims of the latter. If the steward in charge of a farm is of the right sort, he will not primarily seek to achieve a grand reputation for himself and lie awake at night thinking of how he may further his own advantages, but his main endeavor will be to administer

the farm in as profitable a way as possible for his master. When the golden grain is beginning to fill the granaries to the very top and the potatoes the cellar, the monthly cream check reaches figures which would have looked respectable even in Egypt during the seven fat years, and the yield of the orchard is eagerly bid for by St. Louis and Kansas City commission merchants, and the local paper proudly announces what the whole countryside knows that Mr. Miller's farm is a choice estate, flowing both literally and figuratively with milk and honey, and that the haughty metropolitan press, in spite of its snobbishness, has been compelled to make favorable mention of it, then the steward's heart rejoices, and he feels that his time has been well spent. So the Christian steward works faithfully for the honor of his heavenly Master; and when the sheaves are brought in, the Church grows, the Christian influence spreads, he prays: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake," Ps. 115, 1. "Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised," Ps. 113, 2, 3. As he works for the glory of Christ, he will assist in the spreading of His kingdom; and again, when seeking to spread the Kingdom, he will enhance His Master's glory. These two things are inextricably bound up with each other. There is hardly a more beautiful summary of what should be our aims in our stewardship endeavors than the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer: "Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven": the glory of God, the extension of the holy Christian Church, the performance of God's will by us and our fellow-Christians as we are leading sanctified lives. This grant us, dear Father in heaven.

In view of the present emphasis in Protestant churches on the social gospel, it is important for us to see that this so-called gospel is no Gospel. At best it is the proclamation of the second table of the Law. If we as Christian stewards should think it sufficient that we spread and serve this gospel, we should be making the mistake which Jesus warns us against when He says: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

### XXXI

A steward has to render an account when his stewardship is ended. The Scriptures repeatedly emphasize the seriousness of the situation which results when the duties of stewardship are flouted. Thou wicked and slothful servant! — Stewardship, as we have seen, means not possession, but superintendence, management,

supervision, being in charge of something. It denotes a relation which will sooner or later be terminated. As steward it is conceivable that you are the plenipotentiary in a certain sphere, with *carte blanche* as to the decisions to be made; but nevertheless your freedom of action is limited with respect to space and time. Let your activities be ever so vigorous and successful, the day will come when your associates will say, "He *was* a good steward; too bad that such as he cannot go on forever." In other words, the scrutiny of our acts as stewards, the opening of the books, and a comprehensive audit are inevitable. How we need reminding our hearers and ourselves that "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. 5, 10. The parable of the Talents and the similar one of the Pounds are too well known to require a long discussion. Let us merely remind ourselves that in them the Lord shows in words that pierce to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow that His teaching on stewardship is not just a pleasant, entertaining diversion, but that it represents a page in the books of which we read, Rev. 20, 12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." If our parishioners and we ourselves are not to be addressed as wicked and slothful servants, then let us take this chapter on stewardship very seriously.

### XXXII

What we need is repentance with regard to remissness in the past, the Holy Spirit, and His gifts for the present and the future, so that we all, ministers and laymen, may prove more faithful stewards. "God giveth grace to the humble." "My strength is made perfect in weakness." One cannot deny that, generally speaking, we have been rather neglectful of our obligations as stewards, that some sectarian organizations have been far more zealous than we in doing religious work, that we again and again have had to join in the complaint of the Savior that the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. If only throughout our whole Church the conviction would become live and compelling that we must repent, humble ourselves before God, and implore His forgiveness! "Repentance!" should be the shout from one end of our Synod to the other. God is anxious to forgive sins for the sake of His dear Son. If we truly repent, He will grant His Holy Spirit, and there will be a forward movement that will be more in keeping with our high responsi-

bilities. Let us not forget that not the proud and haughty, who believe that they have fully done the Lord's will and rely on their own powers to accomplish it in the future, but the humble, who feel their insignificance, are the recipients of His grace. To the apostle who, tormented by the thorn in the flesh and almost overcome by pain, cried for relief came the reassuring word, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness," 2 Cor. 12, 9. It is a law of the Kingdom that God accomplishes His work through those who are "poor and of a contrite spirit and who tremble at His Word," Is. 66, 2. Prostrated by a sense of our delinquencies and our unworthiness, but raised up by the Gospel-promises, let us perform our several functions as Christian stewards, working while it is day, before the night cometh when no man can work.

W. ARNDT

### Die Lehren des Novatianismus und des Donatismus

Eigentlich könnten wir sogar auf den Montanismus zurückgehen, denn gewisse Begleiterscheinungen dieser frühen häretischen Bewegung haben dieselben Merkmale wie die späteren Schismen, die so viel Unheil in der Kirche anrichteten. Aber bei dem Montanismus muß doch konstatiert werden, daß Montanus mit seinen beiden Anhängerinnen Prisca und Maximilla in seiner Schwärmerei von vornherein gewisse Fundamentallehren leugnete und daß die Fragen des moralischen Rigorismus erst später hinzukamen, während bei den späteren Bewegungen ein etwaiger Unterschied in der Lehre nicht der ursprüngliche Anlaß des Schismas war, sondern erst in den späteren Auswüchsen zutage trat.

Der Novatianismus hatte seinen Ursprung in einer praktischen Frage, und zwar „nicht in einer *sachlichen*, sondern in einer *persönlichen* Differenz“. Anlaß zu dem ganzen Schisma war nämlich die Behandlung der lapsi, deren Zahl in der decianischen Verfolgung ziemlich groß war. Obgleich der Montanismus mit seiner rigorosen Disziplin es so weit gebracht hatte, daß in der Kirche ziemlich allgemein Abgötterei, Ehebruch und Hurerei sowie Mord als Sünden angesehen wurden, die in diesem Leben nicht abgebußt werden könnten, sondern der Barmherzigkeit Gottes im zukünftigen Leben anheimzugeben seien, so war die Praxis in bezug auf „Gefallene“ noch nicht einheitlich. Die Zahl letzterer wurde während der Verfolgung unter Decius so groß, daß man fürchtete, die strengere Ansicht, nach der auch den lapsi die Rückkehr in die Gemeinde gänzlich abgeschnitten wurde, möchte die Christen mancher Gemeinden gefährden. Aus diesem Grunde war die lagere Partei in vielen Teilen der Kirche stark genug, ein gelinderes Verfahren gegen die „Gefallenen“ zu befürworten. Cyprian war der Vertreter dieser Ansicht, während Novatian einer größeren Strenge das Wort redete.

Der Beginn der Meinungsverschiedenheit, die schließlich zum Schisma führte, folgte dem Märtyrertode Fabians, der 236 bis 250 Bischof von Rom war. Bei der vorgenommenen Neuwahl war Cornelius Kandidat der älteren Partei. Auf der andern Seite stand Novatian, der nur den baptismus clinicorum, nicht aber die Konfirmation empfangen hatte und deswegen von manchen als nicht zu einem kirchlichen Amte wählbar angesehen wurde. Trotzdem war er durch Fabian zum Presbyter geweiht worden und scheint ein begabter und gelehrter Mann gewesen zu sein. Seine Stellung gegen Cornelius fand so viel Weißfall, daß er selber als Kandidat der strengeren Partei zum Bischof von Rom gewählt wurde. Wir haben hier also den ersten Fall von Papst und Gegenpapst, da Cornelius sechzehn Bischöfe auf seiner Seite hatte, während Novatian von der Minorität, einschließlich einiger Presbyter, erwählt wurde und drei italienische Bischöfe ihn konsektrten. Novatian erhielt weitere Unterstützung durch Novatus von Karthago, so daß der Gegensatz in Rom sich immer mehr zuspitzte. Merkwürdigerweise hatte dieser Novatus in Afrika zu denen gehört, die die „Gefallenen“ ohne besondere Schwierigkeiten wieder aufgenommen hatten. Als er jedoch nach Rom kam, unterstützte er im Gegensatz zu seiner früheren Praxis energisch den Novatian im Vertreten der Anschauung, daß „Gefallene“ durchaus nicht zur Kirchengemeinschaft zugelassen werden dürften.

Nun war Cyprian von Karthago, der dort gegen Novatus vorgegangen war, weil letzterer ohne sein Wissen einen gewissen Felicissimus zum Diaconus geweiht hatte, ohne Zweifel der bedeutendste Theolog seiner Zeit, und er stellte sich in dem römischen Zwiespalt auf die Seite des Cornelius, da die Konsekration Novatians durch die drei episcopi rustici als Gegenbischof einer Anklage auf falsche Lehre gleichsam. Hieronimus sowohl wie Sokrates erklärten, daß die Hauptanklage gegen Cornelius darauf beruht habe, daß er „Sünder“, das heißt, lapsi, die nach der Meinung der strengeren Partei sich auf immer ausgeschlossen hatten, wieder in die Kirchengemeinschaft aufnahm. Für Cyprian, bei dem das *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* die Sichtbarkeit der Kirche voraussetzte, bedeutete die Nichtzugehörigkeit zu der äußeren Gemeinschaft der Kirche absoluten Ausschluß vom Himmelreich. Novatian dagegen leugnete mit der Versagung der Wiederaufnahme „Gefallener“ nicht die Möglichkeit ihrer endlichen Rettung, denn er dachte sich die Möglichkeit einer Erbarmung Gottes auch außerhalb der sichtbaren Kirche; aber er bestand darauf, daß der Kirche als sichtbarer Gemeinschaft keine Verheißung für die lapsi gegeben sei und daß die Kirche sie selbst bei anerkannter Bußfertigkeit nicht wieder als Glieder an- und aufnehmen dürfe. „Dem Cyprian war die Kirche Heilsanstalt [obgleich er ihre äußere Gestalt überhöhte], dem Novatian eine Gemeinde der Heiligen [im absoluten Sinn].“ Genau genommen, haben wir also auf beiden Seiten eine falsche Auffassung, weil Cyprian in seinem Begriff von der Kirche irrte, Novatian dagegen in seiner Auffassung von der Buße und

der Vergebung der Sünden. Cyprian machte die Einheit der Kirche abhängig vom Episcopat der äußeren Struktur der Kirche; Novatian wollte der ecclesia militans die Heiligkeit der unsichtbaren Kirche zuerteilt haben, so daß nach seiner Meinung die Kirche selber untergeht, wenn sie „Sünder“ (lapsi) in ihre Verbindung aufnimmt.

Der weitere Verlauf des Streites ist bekannt. Die sogenannte katholische Partei hatte die Übermacht, und demgemäß wurden die Novatianer ausgeschlossen. Aber es gelang Novatian, verschiedene Bischöfe, besonders im Orient, für sich günstig zu stimmen, besonders Fabius von Antiochien, sowie Marcian von Arles (im Westen). Im Osten erhielten die Novatianer Zugang besonders durch die Montanisten, die sich sonderlich in Phrygien gehalten hatten. Auf dem Konzil zu Nizäa stand der novatianische Bischof Alesius auf Seiten des Homoousion, und auch später vertraten die meisten leitenden Geister in ihren Reihen die Grundbekenntnisse der Kirche. So wird zum Beispiel der novatianische Bischof von Konstantinopel Sisinnius († 407) von den Historikern Sokrates und Sozomen wegen seiner Gelehrsamkeit und Veredeltheit gelobt. Nichtsdestoweniger wurden seit der Zeit des Kaisers Honorius in Rom (395 bis 423) und schon unter seinem Vorgänger, Theodosius I., und besonders unter Theodosius II. im Osten die Ketzerredite gegen die Novatianer angewandt. Aber doch hielt sich die Sekte bis etwa um 600 in Ägypten, und wir finden Bezugnahmen auf ihre Tätigkeit in Asien bis gegen Ende des siebten Jahrhunderts.

Trotz des bedauernswerten Schismas, das durch den Novatianismus verursacht wurde, läßt sich doch nicht verkennen, daß seine Stellung einen gewissen heilsamen Einfluß ausgeübt hat. Einmal hat der Protest der Novatianer gegen falsche priesterliche und sakramentale Anschauungen im Leben der Kirche etwas Frucht gezeitigt, und zum andern ist durch den Zwiespalt, wenigstens in der Folge, der Unterschied zwischen der sogenannten sichtbaren und der unsichtbaren Kirche erkannt worden. Weitere Anwendungen der Lehren, die wir hier finden, werden am Schluß dieser Abhandlung erfolgen.

Was den Donatismus betrifft, so sehen wir sofort, daß wir es mit gewissen Parallelen zwischen den früheren schismatischen Bewegungen und dieser Spaltung zu tun haben. Der Donatismus hatte seinen Ursprung in Karthago, und zwar während der diosletianischen Verfolgung, und stellte zunächst ein Aufleben des Rigorismus dar, wie sich dieser im Montanismus und im Novatianismus gezeigt hatte. Es handelte sich zu Anfang um Fragen der Kirchendisziplin und des Märtyrums; aber es konnte kaum ausbleiben, daß sehr bald verwandte Fragen mit hereingezogen wurden. Die rigoristische Partei am Anfang des vierten Jahrhunderts, unter der Führung eines gewissen Secundus von Tigris in Numidien und des Bischofs Donatus von Casä Nigrä, suchte die Märtyrerkrone mit fanatischer Todesverachtung und erklärte die Flucht vor Gefahr und die Auslieferung heiliger Bücher für Feigheit und

Berrat, die auf immer von der Gemeinschaft der Kirche ausschließen. Die gemäßigte Partei dagegen, unter der Leitung des Bischofs Mensurius und seines Nachfolgers Cäcilian, befürwortete Klugheit und Besonnenheit und verdächtigte die Motive der wagemutigen Bekennner und Märtyrer.

Schon im Jahre 305 drohte ein Schisma, und zwar in Verbindung mit der Bischofswahl in der Stadt Cita, wo die zwei Parteien einen ziemlich starken Gegensatz bildeten. Aber die Streitfragen kamen nicht zum Austrag bis zum Jahre 311, als Cäcilian mit einer allerdings etwas verdächtigen Eile zum Bischof von Karthago erwählt und dann von Felix von Aptunga (Aptungis), einem als traditor verdächtigten Bischof, konsekriert wurde. Nicht nur weigerten sich die Donatisten, ihn anzuerkennen, sondern er hatte selbst in Karthago viele Gegner, unter ihnen die seniores plebis in der Gemeinde und namentlich eine reiche und abergläubische Witwe namens Lucilla, die vor ihrem täglichen Abendmahlsgang gewisse Reliquien hützte und diese scheinbar mehr als das Sakrament selber wertete. Im nächsten Jahr trat unter dem Vorsitz des Secundus von Tigisis ein Konzil von siebzig Bischöfen, die die rigoristische Schule von Numidien vertraten, in Karthago zusammen, sekte den Cäcilian, der sich weigerte zu erscheinen, furzerhand ab und erwählte anstatt des Exkommunizierten einen Lector seiner Diaconie, Majorinus, einen Hausskund der Lucilla.

So war tatsächlich eine Spaltung in der Kirche eingetreten, denn ein Teil der Gemeinde und der Diözese blieb dem Cäcilian treu, während die andere Partei mit hartnäckigem Fanatismus an Majorinus hing. Auch der Tod des letzteren im Jahre 313 änderte nichts an der Sachlage, weil die Rigoristen als seinen Nachfolger Donatus erwählten, der später den Beinamen „der Große“ erhielt und durch seine feurige Energie und Veredsamkeit seiner Partei bald eine Machtstellung verschaffte, so daß die Kirchenspalzung nach ihm ihren Namen erhielt.

Da in der Folgezeit jede der beiden Parteien sich bemühte, ihre Macht auszubreiten, kamen bald Unruhen bedenklicher Art vor, so daß schließlich Kaiser Konstantin (damals noch ein Heide) sich veranlaßt sah, Bischof Melchiades (Miltiades) von Rom zu beauftragen, daß er mit der Hilfe von fünf gallischen Bischöfen die Streitsache beilegen solle. Zehn Bischöfe jeder Partei wurden nach Rom vorgeladen, und bei dieser Synode wurde Cäcilian von jeder Schul freigesprochen, Donatus und seine Anhänger dagegen verurteilt. Als bei einer zweiten Untersuchung zu Arles (Arelate) das nämliche Resultat erzielt wurde und der Prokonsul Anulinus von Afrila den Befehl erhalten hatte, die Kirchen der wiedertäuferischen Donatisten zu schließen und die unruhigsten Köpfe des Landes zu verweisen, wurde die Aufregung so groß, daß der Befehl widerrufen werden mußte, da es zu Gewalttätigkeiten ernster Art kam. Mittlerweile erstarke die donatistische Bewegung in dem Maße, daß bei einem Konzil im Jahre 330 die Zahl der Bischöfe dieser Richtung 170 (nach einem andern Bericht sogar 270) betrug.

Konstantin hatte im Jahre 321 eingelenkt und den Donatisten Freiheit gestattet, während er der katholischen Partei Geduld und Nachsicht anempfahl. Konstans dagegen griff wieder zu strengerem Maßnahmen, so daß gewisse fahrende Bettelmönche der Donatisten (Circumcelliones) das Volk aufwiegelten und Tobschlag und Mordbrennerei anrichteten. Viele von diesen Fanatikern scheuteten nicht vor dem qualvollsten Tode zurück. Der Aufstand mußte mit militärischer Gewalt unterdrückt werden, und viele der donatistischen Anführer wurden hingerichtet; andere wurden verbannt, und ihre Kirchen wurden geschlossen oder konfisziert. Donatus der Große starb im Exil, erhielt aber sofort einen Nachfolger in der Person eines gewissen Parmenianus. Unter Julian dem Abtrünnigen erfreuten sich die Donatisten einer zeitweiligen Erleichterung, aber unter späteren Kaisern wurde ihre Lage bedeutend schlimmer sowohl durch Verfolgungen als durch innere Zertwürfnisse. Die Verbitterung war so groß, daß sie sich bis in die kleinsten Dinge des täglichen Lebens erstreckte. So wird berichtet, daß der donatistische Bischof Faustinus von Karthago seinen Gemeindegliedern streng verbot, für die katholischen Einwohner der Stadt Brot zu backen.

Am Ende des vierten und zu Anfang des fünften Jahrhunderts bemühte sich sonderlich Augustinus das Schisma zu beseitigen. Wiederholt brachte er Unterredungen zustande, aber die Donatisten wichen gewöhnlich aus und ließen nicht mit sich handeln. Bei einem Religionsgespräch im Jahre 411, unter Vorsitz Augustins, waren 286 katholische und 279 donatistische Bischöfe anwesend. Als Fazit der Besprechung, die sich besonders mit der Frage beschäftigte, ob die Kirche ihr Wesen verliere, wenn in ihrer Mitte anerkannte Sünder als Mitglieder geduldet würden, wurde von dem kaiserlichen Kommissar Marcellinus geurteilt, daß die katholische (rechtgläubige) Partei die donatistischen Einwände entkräftet habe. Als infolgedessen die kaiserlichen Keizerdekrete wieder vollstreckt wurden, traten viele Donatisten teils freiwillig, teils gezwungen, zur katholischen Kirche über, während andere mit großer Hartnäckigkeit ihre gegenteilige Meinung verteidigten. Sie erholteten sich etwas nach dem Einbruch der Vandale in Afrika, erstarnten aber nie wieder wie um die Wende des fünften Jahrhunderts. Erst die Eroberungen der Moslemmedaner im siebten Jahrhundert haben ihren völligen Untergang herbeigeführt.

Der Donatismus hatte seine hauptsächlichen Abirrungen in der Lehre von der Kirche, da er die Behauptung aufstellte, die christliche Kirche höre auf, eine wahre Kirche zu sein, wenn sie Unheilige, zum Beispiel traditores, als Gemeindeglieder dulde. Aus diesem Grunde forderten die Donatisten die Wiedertaufe solcher, die aus der katholischen Kirche in ihre Gemeinschaft übertraten und eine nochmalige Ordination von Priestern, die sich zur Aufnahme meldeten. Sie wollten die sichtbare Kirche zur Vollkommenheit der unsichtbaren erheben, hielten sich selber für unbefleckte Menschen und verachteten völlig ihre Mitbrüder in der

katholischen Partei. Sie bestanden auf der strengsten Form der Kirchenzucht und sprachen allen andern, die nicht mit ihnen stimmten, das Christentum ab. Nach ihrer Lehre war die Gültigkeit der Sakramente abhängig von der Würdigkeit und persönlichen Glaubensstellung des Priesters. Was die katholische Partei anlangt, so kann nicht geleugnet werden, daß man vor der Zeit Augustins oft mit liebloser Strenge gegen die Donatisten vorging und vielleicht auch oft politische Rücksichten mehr gelten ließ als die Lehren des Wortes Gottes allein.

Bei dem Studium dieser Streitigkeiten können wir nicht umhin, gewisse Fingerzeige zu finden, die uns zum ersten Nachdenken bewegen sollten. Einmal scheinen sich die Historiker darin einig zu sein, daß persönliche Differenzen sehr viel zum Ausbruch der Streitigkeiten und zur Verbitterung beigetragen haben, womit man sich befedete. Wenn der menschliche Ehrgeiz nicht bezähmt wird, dann ist es leicht möglich, daß man nur zu schnell den Gegner mißversteht. Dann kommt es auch leicht vor, daß sich Argwohn betreffs der Motive des Gegners einstellt, daß man bei jedem Ausdruck, der von dem Herkömmlichen abweicht, falsche Lehre und Nezerei wittert. Hiermit verbindet sich dann nur zu leicht ein Rigorismus, der keine Lehre annehmen will, sondern starr und fest auf seiner Meinung besteht. Sehr oft gesellt sich hierzu eine Betonung von Auferlichkeit, von Formen. Es ist hier nicht die Rede von Mitteldingen, die infolge falscher Lehre zu Bekennniszeremonien geworden sind, sondern von Ceremonien und ähnlichen Dingen, die lediglich auf hergebrachtem, oft verkehrtem Ursus beruhen. Kurz: So lieb uns die reine Lehre ist und so hart wir auf Lutherische Weisen halten, so laßt uns doch allen Fleiß anwenden, daß wir uns vor Separatismus, vor Kirchenspalzung hüten.

P. E. Krebsmann

## Outlines on the Eisenach Epistle Selections

## Quinquagesima Sunday

1 COR. 1, 21—31

Unbelief directs its most vehement attacks upon the Christian religion against the cardinal doctrine of the Bible, the vicarious atonement. That has been at all times, and will be to the end of days, "unto the Jews," etc., v. 23. Alas, in our day this doctrine is being openly denied and ridiculed by many who claim to be members of, and leaders within, the Christian Church. Shall we follow the fashion of the world? Never.

## **The Gospel of Christ, though Folly to Unbelief, Is Indeed the Wisdom and Power of God**

## 1

Vv. 22. 23. To the world indeed the Gospel is folly. "Can there any good come out of Golgotha? A crucified Jew, an outcast from his own people, a man dead and buried centuries ago, he the Savior of mankind? Foolishness!" And even if unbelief concedes that he is an innocent man, a mighty teacher, the noblest example of self-sacrifice, yet it ridicules the idea of a vicarious atonement. That remains an offense to the world, and foolishness.

Now, the mere fact that the wise men of this world regard the Gospel as folly does not necessarily prove it to be such. The world and its wise men have ridiculed as foolish many ideas of inventors, many assertions of scientists, many theories in medicine, etc. ("Fulton's Folly," flying-machines, the various conflicting theories of scientists, etc.). In spite of ridicule these theories often proved to be immensely practical. Worldly wisdom does not render any one immune against error, nor is every statement of wise and learned men to be taken at face value. The apostle assures us that these worldly-wise men who ridicule Christ crucified and His vicarious atonement as folly are utterly incapable of passing judgment on the matter in question, v. 21. The world by its wisdom cannot fully understand and fathom even those works of God in which it recognizes to some extent the wisdom of God, e. g., creation, preservation, government. The deeper man, with the help of his scientific instruments, chemical analyses, etc., succeeds in penetrating into the nature of the works of creation, the more mysteries arise before his astonished eyes, the less able is he to solve the riddles crowding in upon him. If man cannot understand and fathom the works of creation, which he can see and observe, how can he hope to know and understand God Himself, the Creator, who dwells in a light which no man can approach unto? 1 Tim. 6, 16. Though Rom. 1, 19. 20 remains true, equally true remains Is. 40, 28. Is it surprising, then, that man cannot understand that wisdom of God which is revealed in His plan of salvation, that mystery which "eye hath not seen," etc.? 1 Cor. 2, 9. For wisdom, divine wisdom, is revealed in God's work of salvation, as He who is the Fount of wisdom Himself tells us by His mouth-piece, the inspired apostle, vv. 23. 25. 30.—Now, whom shall we believe? Man, who, if honest, must confess his ignorance, his inability to understand and fathom even the visible works of creation, and hence is quite naturally utterly incapable of understanding the hidden wisdom of God in spiritual matters, or God, who is Truth Himself? God asserts that the Gospel of Christ Crucified, the Gospel of the vicarious atonement, is *wisdom*, His own, God's, *wisdom*. We place our trust not in fallible man, but in God, whose Word is truth. Though all the world deny and

ridicule and rave and rage against this Gospel and regard it as a stumbling-block and foolishness, we bow to God's authority, give to Him the glory that His Gospel is wisdom indeed, and humbly confess: Amen, this is most certainly true, though we cannot fathom it.

## 2

The truth of God's assertion that the Gospel of Christ Crucified is divine wisdom is proved a thousandfold, v. 21. This Gospel of Christ Crucified does not show a way whereby man may save himself by his own efforts, by his character, etc. By the very preaching of this Gospel, so foolish to the world, man is actually saved. Neither does the Gospel save only those who fully understand its mysteries and are able to fathom its depths. It saves "them that believe," v. 21, those who simply accept the preaching of the Gospel as God's own truth, God's own wisdom; those who rejoice in the fact that of God Jesus Christ has been made unto them, etc., v. 30, yea, that Christ Jesus, proclaimed in the Gospel, is indeed our Righteousness, Is. 53; Gal. 4, 4; 2 Cor. 5, 19. He is indeed our Sanctification, who breaks the *power* of canceled sin; who sets our feet on the path of righteousness; who strengthens us in our warfare against sin; who enables us to lead a life pleasing to God. And He is our Redemption. In Him we are set free, redeemed in the fullest sense of the word, free from guilt, from fear, from an evil conscience, from the fear of death, from fretting worries. In Him we have redemption here in this life, and with Him in heaven we shall have the fulness of redemption and salvation. He indeed is the Wisdom of God and the Power of God. And this Gospel which makes this Christ our own, what divine wisdom and power! Moreover, vv. 26—29. In the eyes of the world believers are fools, their faith is childish weakness, a flaw which mars the glory of even those men whom the world must honor and respect because of their achievements. Yet just what the world despises in the Christian has been chosen of God to show the utter foolishness of the world's wisdom and the divine wisdom and power of His Gospel. While the world regards Christians as fools, they, by the grace of God, have been made truly wise and thus serve to confound the worldly-wise, who, in spite of all their worldly wisdom, do not know how to obtain what should be the chief aim of man in this world, eternal salvation. While the mighty ones of this world are slaves of their own passions, are ruled by sin and Satan, the Christians, despised by them, rule over their flesh and blood, exercise dominion over sin, lead a life of righteousness, by their example succeed in raising the standard of morality in their community, and aid in making this world of sin a better and safer place to live in. Though Christians

are "base," ignoble, "despised," of no account, in the eyes of the world, though haughtily the world sweeps past them as though they did not exist, v. 28, these selfsame Christians are chosen by God to be His children and heirs. Their names, often unknown to the world, unmentioned in the annals of history, are written in heaven. They alone really enjoy their existence, their life in this world, in a manner unknown and incomprehensible to this world; for in them dwells that peace of God which surpasses all understanding and the firm conviction that after death there will be everlasting bliss with their God, their Creator and Redeemer.

Is the Gospel folly? No, never. Though the world despises it, though the world will not recognize its glory, it is, and shall ever remain, the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. Let us not like the foolish, unbelieving world despise and reject this Gospel. Rather let us glory in the Lord and His marvelous Gospel, let us hold fast to this foolishness of preaching, and give unto God everlasting praise and honor, of whom we are in Christ Jesus, etc., v. 30.

THEO. LAETSCH

### Invocavit Sunday

HEB. 4, 15. 16

In the preceding context the writer to the Hebrews warns against the fatal sin of the older generation of Israel. They did not believe the promise that the Lord would bring them into Canaan. Their unbelief made them weak. It made them long for Egypt again. It made them lose heart, to despair of ever reaching, conquering, and occupying the Promised Land. But worst of all, it provoked the Lord's anger and judgment. Let us be warned lest the Word given for our salvation become to us a two-edged sword of destruction, vv. 12. 13. To instil faith is the author's aim. That is the scope also of our text.

### Let Us Come to the Throne of Grace

1. *How this is done*      2. *How we shall be blessed for it*

#### 1

We are perhaps inclined to think of the Throne of Grace as in heaven, far removed from us, and hence to decline the gracious summons to come to it. I cannot climb into heaven, can I? If I am to come to the Throne of Grace, it must be accessible. And it is. No impossibility is here asked of us. The Throne of Grace is wherever the Gospel is. Rom. 10, 6—8. We have the Gospel in a multitude of texts, clad in a great variety of expressions, and presented to us from ever varying points of view. In our text the

Gospel, and therefore also the Throne of Grace, is near us in the words, to begin with: "We have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." We have a High Priest, to state it positively, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, who feels for us and with us, who has sympathy with us. This sympathetic High Priest is "the great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God" (v. 14), concerning whom we confess in the Apostles' Creed: "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord," etc.

The fact that He sympathizes with us indicates that we are suffering. Sympathy is for the distressed and afflicted. What calls forth the sympathy of Jesus are our infirmities, our sins, chap. 5, 2. 3; 7, 28; Rom. 5, 6. 8. Verily, our sins put us in need of sympathy. Our sins give rise to all our other infirmities. Sin brought death into the world and all our woe, and—oh, dreadful malady!—it leads to eternal death, to complete and permanent separation from God, 2 Thess. 1, 9; Mark 16, 34; Luke 16, 26. Hence we are in need of sympathy.

And we *have* a Friend in need. Jesus, who is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (chap. 12, 26), under whose feet all things have been put in subjection (chap. 2, 8), Jesus, the Son of God, sympathizes with us sinners, chap. 2, 17. 18. Is not this an amazing statement indeed? The holy and righteous God abhors sin and punishes sin here in time and hereafter in eternity. So the Law says, and that is all we know by nature. But here we are told what is news, glad tidings, for all troubled sinners: Our great High Priest sympathizes with us. He does not hate us on account of our sins. He hates sin indeed, but He has compassion on penitent sinners. He does not want to punish us at all, but save us from our sins, and so great is His mercy that He took on Himself our nature, being made in all things except sin like unto us, and became a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, fulfilling the Law for us, putting away sin, and obtaining eternal redemption for us by sacrificing Himself in our behalf on the cross (chap. 9, 12. 18; 12, 2), ever living to make intercession for those who come to God by Him, chap. 7, 25; 1 John 2, 1. 2.

Jesus, then, loves us sinners? is gracious, merciful to us, forgiving our sins? Surely! What could be more obvious from what has been said, which our text summarizes, saying: "He was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He submitted for our salvation and without sin to temptations and afflictions like ours, well deserved by us, but entirely undeserved by the holy Christ. Though without sin, He endured them to atone for our numberless

failures and defeats in temptation. Yes, we have a High Priest, or Savior, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. And even so His Father is disposed towards us, with whom He is one. The Father sent Him. The Father heard the prayers and supplications our High Priest made with strong cries and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, chap. 5, 7. He exalted Christ, our Substitute. In God's heart, therefore, there is for all penitent sinners nothing but mercy, grace, loving-kindness. As soon and as long as you believe this, you are coming to the Throne of Grace. Coming to the Throne of Grace means believing in the sympathy of our High Priest as manifested in His having been tempted in all things like ourselves, yet without sin, for us. Cp. chap. 7, 25; 11, 6; Matt. 11, 28; John 6, 37, etc.

## 2

What are the blessings of such coming to God? First, boldness. While we are bidden to come to the Throne of Grace with boldness, yet at the same time it is impossible to do so without first believing. Eph. 3, 11. 12. The external and seemingly bold approach of pharisaic individuals is foolhardiness, presumption. Gen. 4, 3. 5; Luke 18, 11. 12. Unbelievers with any knowledge of sin at all are cowardly in their attitude toward God. Adam and Eve, Gen. 3, 7. 8. Conscience makes a coward of natural man. His slavish fear precludes salvation, chap. 10, 39: draw back (cower, shrink) unto perdition; 1 John 4, 18. But when a sinner comes to the Throne of Grace, believes the Gospel, he becomes bold. His heart no longer condemns him, and the result is what we read 1 John 3, 21. He has boldness to approach God in prayer with all kinds of petitions, with great petitions, 1 John 5, 14. He opens his mouth wide for God to fill. He has boldness as to the day of Judgment, 1 John 2, 28; 4, 17. What a blessing such boldness is!

Next the apostle mentions mercy. Mercy is for the miserable, the wretched. And we often are wretched. "O life, thou art a galling load Along a rough and weary road For wretches such as I." But if we through Christ come to God, we can be sure of God's mercy. It may not seem to us at times as if God were merciful to us, but He is. Ps. 103, 13. 17. 18; Luke 1, 50; 18, 13b. 14a. We experience it again and again, and finally it will burst upon us in full and everlasting splendor. God's mercy is as sure to us as the Word.

Another blessing: grace to help in time of need. Believers always get timely help. They get into many difficulties in this life. Hymn 318, 3. Their life is like St. Paul's, though doubtless on a smaller scale, filled with things like those mentioned 2 Cor. 6, 4. 5; Rom. 8, 35. 36. But as a believer you will always get timely help.

And when God says to you: 2 Cor. 12, 9, and when angels carry you into Abraham's bosom, that, too, is timely help. At times the timely help is quite marvelous. The heroes of faith, Heb. 11. What a relief to the harassed soul to be able to count with absolute certainty on grace for timely help.

Let us deplore our sins, but also take comfort in Christ, our precious, sympathetic, loving High Priest, who by being tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin, restored us to God's favor. He is the Way to the Father (John 14, 6), and we go that way by accepting Him as our Savior. Do that, and you will be blessed with boldness, mercy, and grace to find help at the right time. Hymn 512, 1.

P. G. BIRKMANN

### Reminiscere Sunday

1 JOHN 2, 12—17

Palm Sunday is drawing near and with it the solemn hour when a large group of children will be received into communicant membership of the Church. On this day they renounce the devil, all his works, and all his pomp, the sinful, wicked ways of the ungodly world, the ally of the devil, and promise to remain true to Triune God. As we view the wrecks along the highway of life, our hearts grow heavy. Let us pray for these children. As pastors we are to remind them of the things they have learned. Latin name for this Sunday is Reminiscere, remember. So today we say to all members of present and past confirmation classes, Remember your Savior and His grace; beware of your enemies and the dangers. Hence it is appropriate to consider the admonition of the apostle —

### Love Not the World!

1. *What it implies*      2. *Why it should be heeded*

#### 1

Admonition of text is of course addressed to believers. Others would not understand. In a fatherly manner the aged Apostle John speaks to his Christians as his children. What blessed people they are! Sins forgiven for the sake of the precious name of Jesus. Pardon earned for all men is accepted only by Christians through faith. Moreover, older Christians have known Him who is from the beginning, still know Him as Son of God and Savior. The apostle admonishes the young because they have been brought to faith, in conversion have overcome devil, still are standing in His grace. Old and young have been admonished to love the brethren; now they are warned, Do not love the world lest you frustrate the work of the Spirit, lest you have received the grace of God in vain.

Love not the world. The world was good as it came forth out of hand of Creator, especially man. Sin has corrupted the world, changed man, and now man by nature is the enemy of God, hating the Gospel. The mass of unconverted men are designated in Scripture as the world. They refuse to confess sin, to repent, to accept Jesus, to prepare for eternity, and are indifferent to Bible teachings; many openly ridicule the Word of God. This world we are not to love. This does not mean that we should leave the world. Luther states correctly: "To be in the world, to see the world, to feel the world, is a different thing from loving the world." Christians are inwardly separated from the world; they have different aspirations, different views of life, different aims. They live for heaven, to please God; the world lives for this life only, to please itself, ignoring eternity. With this world we are not to be on terms of intimate friendship, lest its ways become our ways, we become callous to sin, have mammon as our god and this world as our heaven.

Neither love the things that are in the world. What are they? Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life. Threefold lust characterizes the world. Lust is satisfaction of sensual appetites by eating, drinking, immorality, sinful pleasures. The world of today calls such things innocent amusements. It reeks with filth, surpassing in wickedness the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah.—Lust of the eyes is the desire to view shameful things. World feasts its eyes on mammon. In itself money is not sinful, but the world makes earthly possessions an end in themselves and ever covets more. It calls avarice faithfulness in one's profession; dishonesty, business acumen; covetousness, thrift. But lust of eyes refers also to feasting the eyes on shameless pictures, lewd stories, obscene screen and stage productions. The final characteristic of the world is the pride of life. It is that haughty, puffed-up arrogance, that braggart show and vainglory, which causes men to make a display of the things of this life. It makes men wish to be great in eyes of others, excel in luxuries, look down on the less fortunate. Others are eaten up with envy as they behold the prosperous. Men forget that everything comes from God. They are stewards, not owners. They make idols of earthly treasures. Satan makes use of this threefold lust ever since he deceived Eve in Paradise. (Trace the threefold lust in the story of the Fall.) —Friends, is there no reason for this admonition? Is not worldliness one of our greatest enemies? Are you feeding these lusts? What about pride of life? Little children already are taught to take false pride in dress and finery, to look down on others. Are you guilty? Love not the world. Why not?

## 2

The wicked ways and lusts of the world are not of the Father, but of the world; they are ungodly ways. Thus Christians beginning to love the world sin against God, the loving Father, merciful Savior, gracious Comforter. True, the world speaks of sin as something harmless. But let no man deceive you with vain words. Remember what you are, a child of God. Whatever comes from the world, no matter how highly recommended, comes from ungodly, antgodly men and women, not from the loving Father. Remember that Jesus had to die to redeem you from the wicked world, Gal. 1, 4. By Christ the world is crucified unto me, says Paul, and I unto the world.

What is more, this admonition should be heeded because love of the world crowds out love of God, v. 15b. That is the devil's trick; he tries to persuade men that they can be friends both of the ungodly and of God, that they can love both sin and the Savior. But it cannot be done; you cannot serve God and Mammon. 1 John 1, 6; Jas. 4, 4. What are you, a friend of the world or a friend of God? If a believer, you must be an enemy of world; if you love the world, where is your faith? The lust of the world destroys faith and love, makes men indifferent to spiritual things. Must not God say to many members of the Church today: "How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me?" Judg. 16, 15a.

And he who loves the world deprives himself of eternal salvation. He who listens to the allurements and vain promises of the world will find that bitter disappointment is in store for him. Even in this life the world cannot fulfil its tempting promises, because it passes away with its lusts, v. 17. How shall it be in eternity? The world has nothing to offer there. Hence: Matt. 16, 26. Christians have been freed from sin, called into the kingdom of Christ; if they return to the wicked ways of world, they will perish with the world, for the world passes away. "It was a custom in Rome that, when the emperor went by upon some grand day in all his imperial pomp, there was an officer appointed to burn flax before him, crying out, *Sic transit gloria mundi!* This was done to put him in mind that all his honor and glory should pass away like the smoke from the burning flax." So we should ever bear in mind the vanity of earthly things. Shall we make these things our chief delight or turn to God, the unchanging God, to Jesus (Heb. 13, 8)? Text, v. 17b. Reminisce; remember, children and adults, your blessed estate, Jesus and His love, the dangers of Satan and the world, your baptismal vow, and love not the world, but remain true to the Father unto death. Then you shall abide forever.

PAUL KOENIG

**Oculi Sunday**

1 PET. 1, 13—16

This is the Third Sunday in Lent. In this blessed season we have before us more than ever in hymns and sermons the suffering and dying of our God and Savior in Gethsemane, before Caiaphas, etc. With His life-blood God has dearly bought us. Our life must now be His. Cp. 1 Cor. 6, 20; Acts 20, 28; Gal. 2, 20. We ask:—

**What Kind of Life does God Justly Expect of His Christians?**1. *A life of hope*2. *A life of holiness*

1

Having reminded the Christians of their election, redemption, regeneration, preservation, final salvation, having praised God for it all, and having told them that all this was so great that all the prophets inquired and searched diligently and that even the angels desire to look into it, the apostle continues in our text: v. 13.

A) *The Christians should hope.* Their whole life should be a life of hope. Ordinarily everybody hopes—the patient for recovery, the farmer for a crop, everybody for better times. Without hope life is unbearable. In spiritual matters the Christians are the only ones that can hope. Of the heathen and unbelievers the apostle says they "have no hope," Eph. 2, 12; 1 Thess. 4, 13. This becomes evident when afflictions come upon them, when their sins bother them, and death approaches. With the Christians it is different. They can exclaim: 1 Pet. 1, 3. Having been born again to a lively hope, they should now also hope, as the apostle tells them in v. 13.

B) *For what should the Christian hope?* "For the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." By grace here not the redemption wrought on Calvary, or the forgiveness of sin, but our final redemption is meant, which as a free gift of God's grace will be given us in part when Christ comes to take us home in death, but fully on the last day. Cp. vv. 4. 5. Oh, what a glorious hope is ours! Cause enough always to hope and wait. 1 Cor. 1, 7; Phil. 3, 20. 21; Titus 2, 13. Cp. also Pieper, *Christl. Dogm.*, III, 103, etc.

C) The apostle also tells us in the text *how we should hope* and look forward to our final salvation in heaven—"to the end," fully, wholly, completely. Nothing should distract us, lead us away from the final goal. Therefore he also adds: "Gird up the loins of your mind." The picture is taken from the long, loose robes of the Orientals. To be ready for work and marching, they had to be girded up at the loins. Israelites, Ex. 12, 11. We do not know when our Lord will call us to come with Him into His heavenly Canaan

and glory; therefore let us be ready always, having our loins girded, not the bodily loins, but the loins of our "mind." Let us draw all our thoughts together and concentrate them on the fulfilment of our glorious hope at the revelation of Christ. Cp. Luke 12, 35. And there is another word: "Be sober." We of course should not be given to strong drink, for drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6, 10; Luke 12, 45, 46. But the word *sober* here evidently means more. We should be sober in all things, not carried away by some infatuation or some craze of the day. We should wait for the Lord's coming, not as some of the Thessalonians, who grew indifferent, reckless, lazy, and would not work because they thought the Lord's Day was already at hand, 2 Thess. 2, 2; 3, 11. Such enthusiasts we still have with us. No; the very fact that the Lord may come at any time must make us sober, sensible, wide awake, cause us to be especially faithful and diligent in our earthly and heavenly calling.—Let us examine ourselves, whether our life is such a life of hope, whether we set our affections on things above and not on things on the earth, Col. 3, 2. What is it that you are really hoping for in this life?

## 2

In the second place, the life which God can and does justly expect of His Christians is a life of holiness. Hope and holiness are closely linked together 1 John 3, 3 and also here; v. 13 is followed by vv. 14—16.

A) God demands holiness in His hoping Christians. He says (v. 15b): "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." He reinforces this demand with a quotation from Lev. 11, 44: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." The Christians are children of God through faith in Christ, Gal. 3, 26. They are children of obedience, text, v. 14. Having become obedient to the Gospel by the gracious operation of the Spirit, they should now also show obedience to the Law of God and gladly do the will of their heavenly Father as it is expressed in the Ten Commandments.

B) In what does true holiness consist? In this, that the Christians as obedient children no longer fashion and shape themselves according to their former lusts in ignorance, v. 14. Formerly, in their natural state, they gave themselves over to their fleshly lusts. They knew no better. They did not know the true God and His great salvation. They thought that, in order to enjoy life and get the most out of it, they would have to yield to their lusts. But now old things have passed away. They have become new creatures in Christ, and as such they will crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. 2 Cor. 5, 17; Gal. 5, 24; Titus 2, 11—13.

However, holiness of life, on the other hand, consists also in this, that we become more and more holy. "It is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy," v. 16. God is absolutely holy. 1 Thess. 4, 3; Heb. 12, 14. Being God's children, we should show even here on earth more and more the nature of our holy Father. For how can we be truly the children of the holy heavenly Father if here on earth we live and deport ourselves as children of the devil?

Are we living up to the expectation of our holy God also in this respect that we no longer have the shape and form of our former unholy self, but that as obedient children of our holy God we most earnestly strive after holiness in thoughts, words, and deeds? Then our hope will not be in vain. The day will come when all imperfection of the present will have to give way to perfection. Ps. 17, 15. May God hasten the day! J. T. ROSCHKE

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## Brief Lenten Outlines

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### I

#### Sorrowful unto Death

MARK 14, 32—36

In viewing the consummation of the work of our precious, divine Savior, Mark, brief, but vivid in his narrative, will be our guide. Let us go to the scene of our Lord's suffering not as curiosity-seekers, but as repentant sinners, conscious of having had a share in causing Him this deep woe. We see the beginning of it in Gethsemane, where the Savior says of His soul that it is—

#### Sorrowful unto Death

1. *His anguish was inexpressibly great*
2. *It was caused not merely by a knowledge of impending suffering, but by His being our Substitute as Sin-bearer*

### I

After the Passover meal and the institution of His Holy Supper, Jesus came to Gethsemane with His apostles. Here there was a garden affording a place for rest.

Something now occurred into the full nature of which we shall not be able to enter here on earth. Jesus withdrew to the interior of the garden. Mental and spiritual suffering set in. The words used by Mark signify that a state of terror came over Him and that He was distressed and troubled.

His inner agitation was so intense as to threaten to bring on death, separation of soul and body. We know that great grief, unexpected grief, has often brought on death.

Jesus prays. How strange! He that can avert all trouble pleads for help. See His deep humiliation. He leans on His disciples for support, v. 33. He who has often helped others now looks around for help.

2

What is the explanation? Jesus had full knowledge of His impending suffering and death. He suffered like a criminal awaiting execution. This was a dreadful thing for Him who is pure and holy.

But more must be said. He had a cup to drink, the chief content of which was guilt, the guilt of sin contracted by all mankind. Cf. 2 Cor. 5, 21. There was glaring down on Him the wrath of God, which smites all sinners. Hence His indescribable woe.

He did drink the cup. He became our Substitute, Mark 10, 45. And so we think not merely of our sins, but rejoicingly, gratefully, likewise of the help effected for us.

A.

## II

## Betrayed

MARK 14, 43—46

In the Passion narrative, so it has been well said, we are shown a cross-section of humanity, its various types of characters, its many ways of opposing Jesus and His message. Let each one of us, instead of merely condemning the enemies of Christ and instead of judging others, watch to see his own likeness appear as the story unfolds. In today's text from Mark's gospel we are shown Jesus as —

## Betrayed

1. *The dastardly deed is done by a disciple*
2. *Under the guise of friendship*
3. *With the capture of Christ as the result*

## 1

The enemies of Jesus had not dared to arrest Him in the Temple, when there was a great multitude of people around Him. A certain man, however, offered to lead the servants of the high priest to a secluded spot where Jesus could be arrested without commotion. This man was one of the disciples of Jesus, one of the Twelve, Judas. He had been one of the closest friends and

companions of Jesus for several years.—Money did it. Even the world despises such an act. Jesus, our Substitute, endures it.

Christians, through their many acts of sinful weakness, hurt Christianity more than all its outspoken enemies.

## 2

What made the act of Judas particularly repulsive was that it was perpetrated in the garb of sincere, affectionate friendship. A kiss was employed by him. This means was probably chosen to make identification certain. Cf. Ps. 41, 9.—The sin of hypocrisy here looms up. We constantly avow friendship for Jesus. Are we sincere? Do we somewhat resemble Judas?

## 3

Jesus is taken captive. Judas had hurried away from the Passover meal to get a number of soldiers. In Gethsemane he finds Jesus. The soldiers bind Christ.

The great paradox: The Lord of the universe is now a prisoner. Sin is a mighty force, as we see here; but love, which makes the omnipotent Creator submit to such indignities, is still greater.

A.

## III

## Condemned as a Blasphemer

MARK 14, 55—64

As we in these days think of our sins, let us not fail to include among them sins of the tongue: words of unjust anger, of peevishness, lies, slanders, defamations, curses, unnecessary or false oaths, blasphemies. That among the transgressions which Jesus atoned for were sins of this nature we are reminded of by our text, which shows us Jesus—

## Condemned as a Blasphemer

1. *The charge of blasphemy was a measure of last resort*
2. *It was totally unfounded*
3. *It was made the basis of a capital sentence*

## 1

From Gethsemane, Jesus was led to the high-priestly palace, first before Annas (John 18, 13), next before Caiaphas (John 18, 24), and it is before the latter where Mark's narrative places Him. A meeting of the chief council had hastily been called in the deep of night.

Charges are sought against Him. Witnesses have been gotten ready. They testify, but there is no agreement. Jesus' effective reply to the falsehoods is silence.

The attempts of the enemies appear frustrated, when the high priest finally resorts to a different method. He asks Jesus directly whether He is the Messiah. Jesus now speaks, answering in the affirmative. It is what His enemies desired. Now they charge Him with blasphemy.

## 2

Jesus had spoken the truth, and had spoken it clearly.

He could not have spoken differently. And what abundant proofs of His Messiahship had He not furnished in His miracles!

His reply indicated the importance of His being accepted as the Messiah, v. 62. This was not merely an academic matter.

His judges, instead of investigating the truthfulness of His assertion about Himself, called Him a blasphemer. If He had not been the Son of God, He would have been guilty of this sin. Cf. John 10, 30-39.

## 3

The sin of blasphemy was punished by death in the old theocracy. Cf. Lev. 24, 11-16. Accordingly the death-sentence was now pronounced upon Jesus. The people condemning Him were His own countrymen, the rulers of the nation which, first of all, He had come to bless.

This ingratitude and rejection must have caused Jesus the severest pain.

He was falsely accused of a sin of the tongue; we, let us say it again, have often actually transgressed in this fashion.

Behold with what a price we are purchased! In thankfulness let us guard our tongue and use it to sing the Savior's praise. A.

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## IV

### Delivered to be Crucified

MARK 15, 6-15

Who can enumerate all the occasions of injustice that the annals of mankind record! Israel was treated unjustly by Pharaoh in Egypt; innocent Naboth was condemned and stoned at the instigation of Jezebel. What must not be overlooked—we ourselves are often unjust in our judgments, finding fault without cause. May this lead up to our discussion of the most heinous perversion of justice history reports. In the text we see the Holy, the Innocent One—

**Delivered to be Crucified**

1. *The trial had convinced the judge of Jesus' innocence*
2. *The verdict ordering crucifixion was wrung from the judge by His enemies*

**1**

The chief council of the Jews could not carry out its sentence, which condemned Jesus to death. The right of meting out capital punishment the Roman government had reserved for itself. Jesus is led before the Roman governor. The charge is that He made Himself the King of the Jews. Jesus admits that He is the King of the Jews. Then many false accusations are hurled at Him. Jesus is silent; these false accusations deserve no reply.

The custom of freeing a prisoner at the feast came in. Pilate was anxious to set Jesus free. Why? He saw that Jesus was innocent and that the chief priests had delivered Him up to him for envy, v. 10. Evidently no proof that He was the fomenter of a rebellion had been presented. While Jesus called Himself King of the Jews, the governor realized that this was not a political title. Pilate saw that Jesus was popular and that the high priests wished to rid themselves of One whom they considered dangerous to their authority.

It is important that we should have assurance of Jesus' innocence. The iniquity He bears is not His, but ours.

**2**

The verdict of condemnation was wrung from the governor. The freeing of Jesus under the customary amnesty granted at the feast was not acceptable to the Jews. Barabbas, a notorious murderer, was preferred.

With regard to Jesus the shout is: "Crucify Him!" Repeatedly this cry is sent up.

When Pilate sees the determination of the Jewish leaders and he cannot break it down, he weakly yields.

Knowing that he is condemning an innocent person, he delivers Jesus to be crucified.

Justice is outraged, but the highest demands of divine justice are met. The greatest crime of the ages is committed, but all the crimes and transgressions of mankind are atoned for. The Jews compass the destruction of Jesus; they have to help to save the world. Cf. Gen. 50, 20.

A.



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## Miscellanea

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### Ministers' Sons and Daughters

Ministers lead all other groups in our population in sending out from their homes sons and daughters who will become honored citizens, despite the usual slurs on such children. Havelock Ellis in his *Study of British Genius*, says: "The proportion of distinguished men and women contributed from among the families of the clergy can only be described as enormous. . . . We find that eminent children of the clergy considerably outnumber those of lawyers, doctors, and army officers put together."

In bringing these facts about Great Britain's population to the attention of the American people, Dr. William Lyon Phelps also calls attention to a study of our latest *Who's Who in America* by Professor S. S. Visher of the University of Indiana. Among other things that study proves that one minister's home out of twenty has sent forth a child worthy to be listed among America's most distinguished people. A little thought upon the part of a reader will show how remarkable that statement is.

Dr. Phelps thinks this preeminence of the children of the parsonage is partly due to "the good health and sound constitution found among those who lead a righteous, sober, and godly life," but that the "chief reason for the success of the sons of ministers is found in the fact that there is no profession whose members are more determined to secure the best possible education for their children than the profession of the ministry. It is one of the finest things that can truthfully be said of ministers."

Ministers may well be thankful, though they are poor in this world's goods, that they are giving to humanity's service sons and daughters who are rich in character and culture. Since the homes of ministers generally have such a record, how important it is that ministers of today shall make every effort to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and shall make every sacrifice to give them the best possible educational equipment for the life that is before them. Die in poverty if necessary, but educate your sons and daughters.

The *Churchman*, from which we quote the words of Havelock Ellis and William Lyon Phelps in the foregoing paragraphs, says in reference to the matter under discussion: "Whether it is due to heredity or environment or, if you please, to the will of God, the fact remains that the more children ministers have, the larger number of leaders we can count on in guiding our future life."—*Watchman-Examiner*.

### The Site of Sodom and Gomorrah

In a recent number of the *American Journal of Archeology* (No. 3, Vol. XL) Frederick G. Clapp offers some interesting information on the site of these two cities, concerning which the opinions of scholars were formerly widely divergent. After presenting the divergent views and giving a fairly detailed description of the basin of the Dead Sea, the

author offers evidence which seems definitely to establish the location of the cities of the overthrow in the southern part of the basin. He quotes with approval the words of Albright: "There can no longer be any question as to whether Sodom and Gomorrah were situated at the southern or northern end of the Dead Sea, since the medieval Zoar, which must have been located in the immediate vicinity of the ancient town, is expressly placed at the southern end, both by Byzantine and by Arabic sources. . . . The only possible location for the Vale of Siddim, with its asphalt wells, is in the southwestern part of the Dead Sea." Mr. Clapp states, in concluding the arguments: "The strongest proof that Sodom and Gomorrah stood at the south end of the Dead Sea is offered by geology. . . . Consequently the weight of scientific evidence as well as traditional opinion favors a southern site and not a location north of the Dead Sea. Most probably the cities of the Plain are buried beneath the waters of the shallow embayment which lies south of the latitude of El Lisan."

P. E. K.

### The "Prophets" of Eph. 2, 20

It is frequently stated that the "prophets" of Eph. 2, 20 are those of the New Testament era, men who held a special office, according to Eph. 4, 11, or were endowed with particular powers to foretell the future, as in the case of Agabus, Acts 11, 28; 21, 10. The contention on the part of those who so hold is that these "prophets" were on the same level with the apostles in the matter of commission and inspiration. But now N. B. Stonehouse, in his interesting dissertation entitled *The Apocalypse in the Ancient Church*, offers some excellent material to demonstrate that the early Church consistently applied the word "prophet" to the Old Testament prophets (with the possible exception of Eph. 3, 5), the writers of the inspired texts of the Old Testament, unless they distinctly designated the particular New Testament office. Thus, in *I Clement* the "prophets" are the Old Testament prophets, who pointed to Christ and expected Him as their teacher through the Spirit. Ignatius and Polycarp hold the same view. Hence the author makes the definite statement: "For the Christians of the year 100 A. D. 'the prophets' signified the prophets of the old Testament." (P. 30 f.)

P. E. K.

### The Position of the Apocalypse in the Ancient Church

In the dissertation referred to in the preceding item the author has made a very thorough search for all the evidence in the early Church which would show the actual position occupied by this antilegomenon in the opinion of the early Fathers and the bishops and their congregations. In the "Summary of Results" presented at the end of the dissertation, Dr. Stonehouse, among others, offers the following conclusions: "It is important that the witnesses for the use of this work also testify to its acceptance as normative; Justin uses it alongside of the Old Testament. Only Marcion is known to have rejected it. . . . Certainly there is no doubt that its position in the New Testament of the Old Catholic Church was very secure. . . . More specifically it was the Church's conviction that the *Apocalypse* was apostolic in origin. . . .

It is clear that apostolicity was the organizing principle of the New Testament of the Old Catholic Church, in which the Apocalypse had a very secure place among 'the apostles' . . . the Apocalypse was included in the apostolic instrument of John. . . . It was to the apostles that the Spirit was to call to mind the things concerning the Lord and that the Lord had entrusted the knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom. The Apocalypse was naturally grouped with these writings, which had a permanent significance for the life of the Church and not with the only transiently significant oracles of the early Christian prophets." (P. 152 ff.)

P. E. K.

### "The Law Cannot Work Sanctification"

By request a paragraph from Dr. Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik* (Vol. III, 20-22) is here offered in an accurate English translation. The heading reads "The Means through which Sanctification is Wrought," and the following points are made: —

"Means of sanctification, strictly speaking, is only that whereby the old man is mortified and the new man is strengthened, hence the *Gospel* (the means of grace), not the *Law*. It has been already explained that the *Gospel* dethrones sin, while the *Law* increases it. Yet the *Law* finds its application also in sanctification, inasmuch as it serves the *Gospel*. *Carpzov* explains, in contrast to inexact presentations of a few Lutheran theologians, that the *Gospel alone* (*solum evangelium*) is the *means* (*organum*) of regeneration and sanctification, that the *Law* 'is merely made an assistant (*assumi*) by the *Gospel* for a definite usage.' If we ask in which respect the *Law* is thus pressed into service, the following may be said: Since the Christian still has *flesh in himself* and according to the flesh is inclined to undervalue the sin which still adheres to him, it is for this reason necessary that his sin and its damnable-ness be constantly revealed to him through the *Law*. For where the knowledge of sin ceases, there faith in the forgiveness, or faith in the *Gospel*, ceases. Thereby the source of sanctification and of good works would be obstructed. According to the *Old Adam* the Christian is furthermore inclined to *form his own thoughts* concerning a holy, God-pleasing life and even to regard sins as virtues and virtues as sins. With regard to this darkening of the knowledge of the holy will of God the *Law* serves also the Christian as 'rule'; that is, it constantly shows him the right form of a God-pleasing life and the truly Christian works. But the strength to do the right works and to omit the evil works proceeds always and only from the *Gospel*. Paul admonishes the Christians to offer their bodies to God as a sacrifice (*παραστήσα*) διὰ τῶν οἰκτιουμένων τοῦ θεοῦ, Rom. 12, 1; and John invites to love toward God and toward one another with the reference, διὰ αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἡγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, 1 John 4, 19, 11. In every case the *Gospel* must write the *Law* into the heart. Luther calls attention to the fact that preachers become guilty of the deficit in sanctification and good works by virtue of the fact that they attempt to effect sanctification and good works through the *Law* instead of by the *Gospel*."

P. E. K.

### An Indispensable Tool

It is said of the great preacher and exegete Alexander MacLaren that it was his custom to spend one hour each day looking into the face of Jesus, *one hour with his Greek Testament*, and one hour with his Hebrew Bible. The late Dr. A. T. Robertson offers the same information concerning the great preacher Broadus, stating that this expert teacher and theologian was thoroughly at home in his Greek Testament, as was Robertson himself. The same holds true with regard to hundreds and probably even of thousands of consecrated preachers whose aim is to present the message of salvation with ever new vigor and life. For that reason we may safely regard it as self-evident that every pastor who can at all use the Greek language will possess one or more Greek Testaments, so that this indispensable tool will always be at hand.

For decades most of our pastors have been using the Nestle New Testament, which was commonly made the basis of their New Testament study at our St. Louis Seminary. All men of this type will certainly be happy to know that the Privilegierte Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt of Stuttgart, Germany, has continued its endeavors of publishing Greek Testaments which would take cognizance of the research work of the foremost students in the field, so that *all* pastors, even those stationed at a congregation remote from library facilities, may have the results of the best scholarship in this small volume. Of particular value to the pastor who has much traveling to do is the edition of the Nestle Testament (we have the fifteenth) which has been issued in ten sections, all of which are bound in limp cloth and are most convenient to be slipped into the pocket for reading and studying as one has a few minutes in the rounds of pastoral calls or other professional work. The ten sections are sold in a neat case, which will permit them to stand securely on the shelf when they are not in use.

The sixteenth edition of this notable publication appeared late last summer as *Novum Testamentum Graece cum apparatu critico curavit † D. Eberhard Nestle, novis curis elaboravit D. Erwin Nestle*. It is interesting even from the fact that the introduction is now offered in German, Latin, English, and Norwegian, which, of course, appeals to a wider clientele. But it should also be said that Dr. Erwin Nestle carried on in the manner of his illustrious father in making every effort to offer a text which is in agreement with the best scholarship. Not only have all the great codices been carefully studied again, together with scores of minuscules, but the editor has included many references to such texts as the Koridethi manuscript, whose importance was acknowledged by men like Kirsopp Lake and others. Even though the footnotes average only ten to twelve lines, there is a wealth of critical material contained in them, and these references will suffice for all ordinary studies in the New Testament. The conservative Lutheran pastor will not always agree with the readings adopted by the editor, but on the whole he will find himself in hearty accord with the text as offered. The application of sound hermeneutical rules in sane textual criticism will enable every pastor to use this new edition with great profit; for it is truly an *indispensable tool* to the conscientious pastor.

P. E. K.

### Those Home-Made Orders of Service

There can be no doubt, as the Augsburg Confession states in Article VII, that every congregation has the right to construct its own order of worship, and hence the matter should not be made an *absolute* issue. But in the relative sense there is much to be said in favor of an intelligent uniformity, and pastors may well be expected to take the leadership in removing the liturgical chaos which now exists. This, however, cannot be done if every one follows the dictates of his own subjective tendencies and likings. Our "Morning Service, or the Holy Communion" as well as the services for matins and vespers are based upon orders of acknowledged superiority, which were constructed on the basis of a thorough liturgical understanding. Hence it would be far better to limit the participation of the congregation to the minimum than to make arbitrary shifts in the several parts of the liturgy.

The chief sufferer from these eruptions of subjectivism is the *Kyrie*, which is most frequently made a part of the *Confession of Sins*. But this is liturgically wrong. The significance of the *Kyrie* in the Common Order is this: The Christian, having received the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, does not hesitate to resort to a challenging importunity in pleading with the Lord for the alleviation of the sufferings occasioned by the presence of sin in this world and in this connection immediately to give all glory to God in anticipation of the hearing of his petition. A note from Loehe's *Agenda* throws much light on this interesting question: "Das Kyrieleison mit Neueren, z. B. mit Layriz, zu einem Suendenbekenntnis und das *Gloria in excelsis* zu einer Absolution zu machen, ist scheint es mir, eine rein genoetigte Sache. Sowenig der Bettler am Wege mit seinem 'Seid so barmherzig!' seine Suende bekennen will, so wenig die Kirche mit dem *Kyrie*. Nicht die Suende, die *Not* wird bekannt. Selbst wo in den spaeteren Tropen des *Kyrie* der Suende Erwaehnung geschieht, ist die Suende doch nur als *Not* gefaszt. Was Hommel in seiner Liturgie vom *Kyrie* im Gegensatz zur modernen Auffassung desselben als eines Suendenbekenntnisses sagt, ist ganz richtig. Ein Meister in liturgischen Dingen, der Kardinal Bona, welcher auch von lutherischen Liturgikern anerkannt wird, hat laengst gesagt: *Ipsum Kyrie eleison non humana institutione, sed occulto quodam naturae instinctu usurpari coepisse manifestum est. Cum enim homo multis miseriis ab ipsa infantia ob culpam primi parentis veluti haereditario iure subiectus sit, ad Illius opem implorandum natura ipsa impellente excitatur, qui solus miseris misericordiam praestare et tot malis oppressam sublevare potest. Ideo in Veteri Testamento hae predicti formulae frequentissimae sunt: Domine, miserere; miserere me, Deus; Miserere nostri, Deus omnium — et aliae eiusdem generis. . . . Ganz als Bettlerin, nicht als Suendenbekennerin, rief auch schon das kanaanaeische Weiblein Matth. 15, 22 ihr Kyrieleison.*" (S. 30 f.)

P. E. K.



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## Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

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### I. Amerika

**Meeting of the Representatives of the U. L. C. A. and the Missouri Synod.** — It was a historic occasion when on November 23 and 24, 1936, in the Hotel Statler, Detroit, Mich., representatives of the U. L. C. A. and the Missouri Synod for the first time held a conference to see whether the obstacles preventing the establishment of pulpit- and altar-fellowship between the two bodies and their cooperation and eventual union could be removed. The colloquents for the U. L. C. A. were Dr. F. H. Knubel, Dr. C. M. Jacobs, Dr. H. F. Offermann, Dr. H. H. Bagger, Dr. P. H. Krauss, Mr. E. F. Eilert, Mr. J. K. Jensen, and Mr. E. Rinderknecht; for the Missouri Synod: Dr. Th. Engelder, Dr. W. Arndt, Dr. C. F. Brommer, Pastor F. H. Brunn, and Pastor K. Kretzmann. Mr. Rinderknecht was chosen chairman.

The first subject to be discussed was that of Lutheran solidarity, the desirability of which was ably presented by Dr. Knubel, a presentation which evoked expressions of agreement from all. After this the chief topic of the conference was entered upon, the doctrine of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. The *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod, treating of this doctrine in its opening paragraphs, was made the starting-point. In the course of the conference Dr. Jacobs presented a statement which in its substance had been approved by his colleagues. It became apparent that there was a disagreement between the colloquents as to this doctrine. The discussions were marked by friendly courtesy and utter frankness. Whether, when, and where future conferences will be held has not yet been determined.

#### Joint Statement of the Secretaries

**Was ist gemeint?** In der „Kirchlichen Zeitschrift“ für Oktober 1936 findet sich ein von P. Otto W. Heid, wohl Glied der Vereinigten Lutherschen Kirche, gehaltener Vortrag, der neben vielem Guten auch manches bringt, was Kopfschütteln herborrufen muß. „Kirchliches Bekennen und kirchliches Handeln“ ist der Titel. Was uns unverständlich oder auch verlebt erscheint, ist erstlich einmal der folgende Passus (S. 578): „Dieses Verständnis der Bekennnisse verpflichtet uns nun nach zwei Seiten. Einmal: Die Nachfolge Jesu kann bei einem Menschen ernst sein, nur die Deutung falsch. Der Herr hat deshalb auch seine Jünger unter Katholiken und Sektierern, und das drohende „damnamus“ Roms und Missouris gegen die leiseste andere Deutung der Nachfolge ist bei aller prinzipiellen Verschiedenheit eine Verlegung der Gemeinsamkeit der Sache Jesu.“ Roms und Missouri in einem Atemzug genannt — der Gieb tut weh. Doch, aufrichtig gefragt, wir würden etwas darum geben, könnten wir erfahren, worauf sich der Verfasser bezieht. Was ist es, was hier Missouri zur Last gelegt wird? Gewiß doch nicht die Ansicht, daß nur in der lutherischen Kirche wirklich Jünger Jesu, also solche, die dem Heiland in Wahrheit nachfolgen, anzutreffen sind. Wenn Missouri irgendeine Lehre mit aller Kraft vertreten hat, dann ist es diese, daß überall, wo noch Christus ge-

predigt wird, selbst im papistischen und calvinistischen Lager, es Nachfolger Jesu gibt. Es ist allerdings wahr, daß Missouri jede Abweichung von der Lehre Jesu verwirft. Ist P. Heick etwa bereit zu erklären, daß ihm ein Abgehen von Jesu Wort etwas Gleichgültiges ist? Sein Artikel hätte wenig Sinn, wenn er solch eine Haltung den Worten des Erlösers gegenüber verteidigen wollte. Oder will er sagen: Bei der Nachfolge Jesu kommt es nur auf den guten Willen an? Ist er wirklich auf den Standpunkt gekommen, daß er behauptet: Alle Wege führen zum Himmel, so lange es dem Wanderer mit seinem Pilgern nur ein rechter Ernst ist? Eines so krasse Unglaubens möchten wir ihn nicht beschuldigen. Also was wollen die Worte: „Die Nachfolge Jesu kann bei einem Menschen ernst sein, nur die Deutung falsch“ und: Missouri verurteilt „auch die leiseste andere Deutung der Nachfolge Jesu“? Missouri hält dafür, daß, wer an Jesum als seinen Heiland glaubt und sich unter sein Wort beugt, selbst wenn er noch in diesem oder jenem Stück oder auch in vielen Stücken irren sollte, sein Jünger und Nachfolger ist. Vertwirrt nicht auch P. Heick jede leiseste andere Deutung der Nachfolge Jesu? Was ist der Sinn seiner Polemik? fragen wir noch einmal.

Positiv verwirrend wirkt es, wenn S. 579 vom Verfasser gesagt wird: „Nein, die Schrift allein genügt als Bekenntnis nicht, weil sie weder ein Lehrbuch der Dogmatik (17. Jahrhundert) noch ein Gesetzbuch ist, wie Rom und Genf meinen, sondern in erster Linie Geschichte und ihre Deutung bietet, von der wir aber durch Jahrhunderte getrennt sind, so daß wir einer Norm bedürfen, nach welcher die Schrift gedeutet werden muß. Das empfand man auch schon in der Urgemeinde, sonderlich als der Kampf mit der Gnosis brennend wurde. Taufbekenntnis, regula fidei und das Bischofsamt, das waren die Stücken der Kirche in der Auseinandersetzung mit der Gnosis, die sich gerade so gut wie die Kirche auf die Schrift berief. Deshalb hat sich auch folgerichtig in der Reformationszeit die lutherische Kirche nicht mit dem Formalprinzip, sola Scriptura, begnügt; denn das hatten die Schwarmgeister auch. Ja selbst das Tridentinum zitiert gern und viel die Schrift. Sondern zu dem ‚die Schrift allein‘ trat das sola fide hinzu. Nur wenn die Schrift von diesem Gesichtspunkt aus gelesen wird, daß sie mir Antwort geben soll auf Luthers Frage: ‚Wie kriege ich einen gnädigen Gott?‘ dann allein habe ich die Schrift verstanden. Sie ist niemals ein Lehrbuch der Naturwissenschaften noch ein Gesetzeslode für das soziale und nationale Leben noch ein Wahrsagebuch, um das Geheimnis der Zukunft zu enthüllen; also weder das, was teils die alten Dogmatiker und heute noch manche Lutheraner in Amerika noch was Rom und Genf noch was die Schwärmer aus ihr gemacht haben.“

Zunächst ist doch der zu Anfang dieses Paragraphen auf die Dogmatiker des 17. Jahrhunderts gemachte Angriff nicht gerechtfertigt. Diese teuren Gottesmänner hatten allerdings ihre Schwächen und Gebrechen, wie wir die unsrigen haben, aber man kann ihnen nicht zur Last legen, daß sie aus der Bibel ein Lehrbuch der Dogmatik gemacht hätten. Um nur eins zu erwähnen, in dem Fall hätten sie kaum selber so viele Dogmatiken geschrieben, wie es tatsächlich der Fall war. Freilich eins haben sie getan: sie haben ihre Beweise immer aus der Schrift genommen. Wenn sie damit aus der Bibel ein Lehrbuch der Dogmatik gemacht haben, dann wollen wir den Ausdruck nicht beanstanden. Aber will der Verfasser ihnen das zum

Borwurf machen? Wenn er gegen Ende des Paragraphen sich noch einmal über die alten Dogmatiker und auch über „manche Lutheraner in Amerika“ beschwert, so möchten wir wünschen, daß er etwas genauer gesagt hätte, worin ihm diese den eigentlichen Charakter des Bibelbuches anstaßen. Unsers Wissens haben weder die alten Dogmatiker noch hat irgendein Lutheraner in Amerika je direkt oder indirekt erklärt, die Heilige Schrift sei „ein Lehrbuch der Naturwissenschaften“ oder „ein Gesetzesstodex für das soziale und nationale Leben“ oder „ein Wahrsagebuch, um das Geheimnis der Zukunft zu enthüllen“. Daz wir alle Weissagungen der Schrift als göttliche Wahrheit ansehen, will der Verfasser hoffentlich nicht kritisieren. Ist dies nicht auch einer der nicht gerade seltenen Fälle, wo mit Hilfe der Einbildungskraft ein Strohmann errichtet wird, dem man dann mit Leichtigkeit den Gar aus machen kann?

erner scheint es uns, daß der Verfasser in diesem Abschnitt allerlei durcheinanderwirft. Die Schrift allein genügt als Bekenntnis nicht, sagt er. Das ist richtig. Aber der Grund, der angegeben wird, ist nicht zutreffend. Die Schrift genügt nicht als Bekenntnis, weil sich alle christlichen Parteien darauf berufen und darum die Parole „Wir stehen auf der Schrift!“ ziemlich nichtssagend geworden ist. Was er als Begründung anführt, ist vielmehr eine Antwort auf die Frage, wie es kommt, daß so viele Leute, die sich angeblich auf die Schrift stellen, diese nicht verstehen.erner ist es doch nicht so, daß wir, weil wir „durch Jahrhunderte von der Geschichte der Schrift und ihrer Deutung“ getrennt sind, einer Norm, die Schrift zu erklären, bedürfen, während dieses Bedürfnis in den Anfangsjahren der Kirche nicht vorhanden gewesen wäre. Wenn man das sola fide eine Norm der Schriftauslegung nennen will (und um die Terminologie wollen wir uns nicht streiten), so darf man nicht aus dem Auge verlieren, daß diese Norm im Jahre 70 geradesogut zu Recht bestand wie 1670.

Der Verfasser führt überhaupt eine merkwürdige Sprache. „Die lutherische Kirche hat sich nicht mit dem Formalprinzip, sola Scriptura, begnügt, denn das hatten die Schwarmgeister auch . . ., sondern zu dem, die Schrift allein‘ trat das sola fide hinzu.“ Warum verfährt der Schreiber nicht etwas mehr säuberlich? Wenn er behauptet, die lutherische Kirche habe sich nicht mit dem Formalprinzip, sola Scriptura, begnügt, weil das die Gegner auch hatten, so fragt man unwillkürlich: Welches andere Formalprinzip haben die Lutheraner noch hinzugenommen? Will er sagen, daß sola fide sei ein weiteres Formalprinzip? Wir sehen, bei ihm geht es durcheinander. Anstatt darzulegen, daß die Lutheraner sich allerdings mit dem Formalprinzip sola Scriptura begnügten, während im Unterschied von ihnen die Papisten die Tradition und die Lehrentscheidungen der Kirche und die Schwärmer die Vernunft und die „innere Stimme“ hinzunahmen, springt er mit einem Mal auf ein ganz anderes Gebiet über, auf das des Lehrinhalts selbst, wie ihn die Väter aus der Schrift schöpften. Wir vermuten fast, daß, was der Verfasser sagen will, dieses ist: Die Schrift war den Lutheranern die einzige Norm; aber wohl gemerkt! die rechtverstandene Schrift, die Schrift, insofern sie „Christum treibt“, insofern sie das sola fide lehrt. Damit wäre dann nicht ein zweites Formalprinzip genannt, sondern vielmehr das eine genannte eingeschränkt oder vielleicht auch beschrieben. Darüber ließe sich dann viel sagen. Solch einen Ausspruch könnten wir ohne

weiteres unterschreiben; es könnte sich aber auch dahinter viel Irrtum verbergen.

In Summa, der Verfasser ist auf dem Kriegspfad gegen die alten Dogmatiker und Missouri, das ist klar. Aber nicht so klar ist, was er an ihnen auszusezen hat und ob er wirklich die Stellung der Angegriffenen versteht.

A.

**Auburn Affirmation.** — In the *Presbyterian* of July 16, 1936, the interested reader will find the complete text of the often-mentioned Auburn Affirmation. It was "released for use in the religious weeklies beginning January 6, 1924." The Affirmation constitutes the reaction of the liberal element of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America against what the signers call "persistent attempts to divide the Church and abridge its freedom." The signers say: "At the outset we affirm and declare our acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as we did at our ordinations, 'as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.'" From the body of the document we quote a few of the more important statements: "By its law and its history the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America safeguards the liberty of thought and teaching of its ministers. At their ordinations they 'receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.' This the Church has always esteemed as sufficient doctrinal subscription for its ministers. Manifestly it does not require their assent to the very words of the Confession or to all of its teachings or to interpretations of the Confession by individuals or church courts. . . . Of the two parts into which our Church was separated from 1837 to 1870 one held that only one interpretation of certain parts of the Confession of Faith was legitimate, while the other maintained its right to dissent from this interpretation. In the Reunion of 1870 they came together on equal terms, 'each recognizing the other as a sound and orthodox body.' The meaning of this, as understood then and ever since, is that office-bearers in the Church who maintain their liberty in the interpretation of the Confession are exercising their rights guaranteed by the terms of the Reunion. A more recent Reunion also is significant, that of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, in 1906. This Reunion was opposed by certain members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America on the ground that the two churches were not at one in doctrine; yet it was consummated. Thus did our Church once more exemplify its historic policy of accepting theological differences within its bounds and subordinating them to recognized loyalty to Jesus Christ and united work for the kingdom of God." Under the heading "Concerning the Interpretation of the Scriptures" the authors say, for instance: "There is no assertion in the Scriptures that their writers were kept 'from error.' The Confession of Faith does not make this assertion; and it is significant that this assertion is not to be found in the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed or in any of the great Reformation confessions. The doctrine of inerrancy, intended to enhance the authority of the Scriptures, in fact impairs their supreme authority for faith and life and

weakens the testimony of the Church and the power of God unto salvation through Jesus Christ. We hold that the General Assembly of 1923, in asserting that 'the Holy Spirit did so inspire, guide, and move the writers of Holy Scripture as to keep them from error,' spoke without warrant of the Scriptures or the Confession of Faith."

The Affirmation furthermore declares that the General Assembly, without concurrent action of the presbyteries, has no authority to declare what the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America believes and teaches and that for the General Assembly to say that any doctrine is an essential doctrine is an unconstitutional procedure. It objects to the judgment of the General Assembly which stated that "doctrines contrary to the standards of the Presbyterian Church" had been preached in the First Presbyterian Church of New York City (the reference being to the preaching of Dr. Fosdick). It furthermore states that the signers are unwilling to let the five doctrinal statements of the General Assembly of 1923 (having to do with the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of our Lord, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection of Christ, and His performance of real miracles) be used as tests "for ordination or for good standing" in the Church. How Modernism expresses itself on these doctrinal points can be seen from these words of the authors: "We all hold most earnestly to these great facts and doctrines: we all believe from our hearts that the writers of the Bible were inspired of God; that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh; that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and through Him we have our redemption; that, having died for our sins, He rose from the dead and is our ever-living Savior; that in His earthly ministry He wrought many mighty works and by His vicarious death and unfailing presence He is able to save to the uttermost. Some of us regard the particular theories contained in the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1923 as satisfactory explanations of these facts and doctrines. But we are united in believing that these are not the only theories allowed by the Scriptures and our standards as explanations of these facts and doctrines of our religion and that all who hold to these facts and doctrines, whatever theorizing they may have employed to explain them, are worthy of all confidence and fellowship."

When one has read these statements, one is not surprised to learn that they caused a great storm of indignation in those circles of the Presbyterian Church where the Scriptures are still regarded as the infallible Word of God.

A.

**Lutheranism Appraised by an Outsider.**—What the non-Lutheran religious press, especially those papers which espouse a liberal theology, gave especial attention to in the proceedings of the convention of the United Lutheran Church in Columbus was the debate which featured the convention's discussion on the attitude of the U. L. C. toward social issues. The *Christian Century* not only published a lengthy report on the meeting, written by one of the members of its staff who was in attendance, but it submitted to its readers a long editorial having the heading "New Stirrings within Lutheranism," in which the U. L. C. and its policy as well as Lutheranism in general is examined. It is inter-

esting to see what view Charles Clayton Morrison, who presumably wrote the editorial, takes of Lutheranism and the various Lutheran church-bodies in America. We quote from the editorial: "The attitude which has been characteristic of the Lutheran Church toward other churches and toward their common social responsibilities is well known. In a word, Lutheranism has been the most denominational of denominations. The inheritors of a rich historic tradition, Lutherans have for the most part looked upon it as a prize to be guarded rather than a good to be shared. No other Protestant Church has been more concerned to keep intact and clearly marked every item which differentiates it from other groups, just as no other has gone farther in claiming divine sanction for its form of government, its doctrines, and its liturgy. Non-Lutherans have usually been excluded from Lutheran Sacraments and non-Lutheran ministers from Lutheran pulpits. The Lutheran Church has been perhaps the least cooperative of all the larger Protestant churches in the various interdenominational endeavors. But Lutheranism is by no means a unit in America. There are seventeen denominations of Lutherans, of which the United Lutheran Church, whose delegates met at Columbus, is the largest and most aggressive. For some time there have been signs in this Church of revolt from the traditional position of denominational aloofness and exclusiveness, although its official pronouncements continue to reaffirm the ancient divisive dogmas and although a majority of its members still hold to them; nevertheless a growing minority of ministers and laymen have been disregarding them in practise or, as they would probably prefer to say, have been reinterpreting them in more generous terms. Thus there has come about in the United Lutheran Church a measure of pulpit- and altar-fellowship with other Protestants which the official declarations of the Church forbid. And by tolerating such practices, the United Lutheran Church as a whole has departed somewhat from its announced position. These tendencies in this particular branch of Lutheranism toward doctrinal tolerance and toward fellowship with other churches, may be unimpressive to one altogether outside the Lutheran camp. But inside they are seen to have considerable importance. This appears in the fact that it is these tendencies which more than anything else stand in the way of a unified Lutheranism in this country. The report to the recent convention by the special commission on relationships with other American Lutheran church-bodies shows that it is because the more conservative Lutheran groups are not convinced (in spite of the pronouncements, which they find satisfactory) of the doctrinal fidelity and denominational exclusiveness of the United Lutheran Church that they are still unwilling to consider organic union with it. This same report reveals how far such union is from realization and how wide are the divergences among the Lutheran groups when it tells of the meeting of the unification commission of the United Lutheran Church with that of the American Lutheran Church, the next largest Lutheran body. It seems that the two commissions met with different understandings of what they were to accomplish. The United Lutherans, instructed to find a basis for organic union, were surprised to discover that the only question the representatives of the American Lutheran

Church were authorized to discuss was whether they might not under certain conditions be willing to maintain altar- and pulpit-fellowship with their fellow-Lutherans. For them union was not in the picture at all.

"Under these circumstances it is natural that a strong temptation to go some distance in meeting the demands of the more reactionary Lutheran bodies should be felt within the United Church. Nation-wide Lutheranism is a step toward world-wide Lutheranism, which is obviously the ideal of the official leaders of the denomination. But this step will be a costly one if it involves the surrender of the small, but significant progress the United Lutheran Church has made toward a cooperative relationship within American church-life. What is vitally important is a united Christendom; but a united Lutheranism, if it is also to be an isolated Lutheranism, would represent not progress, but reaction. There is every indication that the forward-looking leadership within the United Lutheran Church is quite aware of this fact and will not permit the sacrifice of the gains their denomination has made."

The editor of the *Christian Century* thinks it a hopeful sign with respect to Lutheran participation in the solving of economic and social difficulties that at the Columbus convention there was at least a strong debate on the question to what extent the Lutheran Church might cooperate in the endeavors which are so dear to the *Christian Century* and that a vigorous minority opposed the negative course which was approved by the convention. We feel that the last paragraph of the editorial should be quoted also: "When the president of the convention said, 'The need of the present moment . . . is that in all nations Christians unitedly insist that the Government must not interfere with the property and full freedom of the Church,' he was evidently thinking of the German Church; but he defined the need in terms which the contemporary experiences of that Church prove utterly inadequate. The Church cannot be content merely to be let alone. If the tragic and heroic experiences of thousands of German Christians during recent years teach anything, it is that the attempt to maintain the Church in isolation from the social order is doomed to failure and that for the Church to refuse to invade the order of the 'secular' is to invite an invasion of its own sacred precincts. America needs a Lutheran Church which, without surrendering any of the values which belong to its tradition, will commit itself to building here and now the kind of social order in which alone those values will have some chance of survival. To be free, the Church must do more than insist upon its own freedom — it must demand, and help create, the kind of society in which all men shall be free."

Our readers, we are sure, will rather agree with President Knubel than with the editor of the *Christian Century* in the clash of opinions which we view in the last paragraph quoted. To the careful consideration of all U. L. C. A. ministers and officials we commend the statement of the editorial that "there has come about in the United Lutheran Church a measure of pulpit- and altar-fellowship with other Protestants which the official declarations of the Church forbid" and that "by tolerating such practises the United Lutheran Church as a whole has

departed somewhat from its announced position." The *Christian Century* is right when it holds that these tendencies, more than anything else, "stand in the way of a united Lutheranism in this country." That Dr. Morrison, a non-Lutheran, is ignorant of the earnestness with which confessional Lutherans have always insisted that their particular form of government and their liturgy are not claimed to rest on divine sanction, we can understand. He is a very busy man, edits two religious journals, lectures a great deal, and his chief interest is not doctrinal theology, but, if we mistake not, philosophy and sociology. What surprises one is that he does not see that, where the Church has very actively participated in politics and largely dominated the social life of the nation, for instance, in Russia, Spain, and Mexico, the ultimate results, as we view them now, have been most unsatisfactory. A.

**The Challenge of the New Atheism.**—Writing editorially in *Christianity Today* (November 16, 1936), Miss Maude Howe has this to say of the New Atheism which is being spread in America: "The New Atheism invites into its membership every cult and ism that will deny Calvary. We can therefore realize the menace of this planned propaganda to build up world revolution on a foundation of atheism. The New Atheism is not the classical freethought of the seventeenth century in any sense of the word, but it is a far more subtle and dangerous thing and already claims a membership of over seventeen million members in sixty-four countries, working, as so many atheists have told me personally, night and day to bring about world revolution. The American Association for the Advancement of Atheism received a charter in 1925, and five times a similar charter has been tried in Canada. We pray that it may never be granted and are watching to cut across the application every time. We praise God for authorities in many cases sympathetic to the Christian faith. Members of the New Atheist cult visit hospitals and even in some cases help pedlers to propagate atheism as they go from door to door. In almost every well-known school and college in the world there is an atheist member. They even have atheist workers in Christian organizations. They have atheist members attending churches to offset appeals from a Christian pulpit. Every one of these statements can be proved up to the hilt. To disprove the New Atheism and check its pernicious work, the International Christian Crusade was organized in Canada in 1928. By now it has spread to several other countries. In one year the International Christian Crusade received over five thousand letters from those losing faith or such as were concerned about the lack of faith in their loved ones."

Today pastors must watch especially young people attending colleges and universities where atheism in the form of evolutionistic materialism is being spread throughout the country. Unofficial reports which we have seen have reported the number of faculty members and students at American universities voting the Socialist and even Communist tickets as alarmingly high. As Pastor Voronaef, a Russian refugee, recently said in a lecture, delivered here in St. Louis: "Poor people! They do not know what they are voting in." J. T. M.

**A Good Article.**—While *Christendom*, the new quarterly issued by Willett Clark & Co. and edited by Charles Clayton Morrison, who likewise is the editor of the *Christian Century*, usually brings articles that have a modernistic tendency and are read with grief by one who in all simplicity adheres to the Gospel preached in the Holy Scriptures, the autumn, 1936, issue contains a surprise for conservatives, an article of a different type, by Nathaniel Micklem, professor of Dogmatic Theology at Mansfield College, Oxford, on the subject "On the Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion." The article is so well written, so sprightly and fresh in its presentation, so full of interesting historical and other pertinent allusions, that we read it with real gratitude. There are some erroneous statements in it, but its main thesis is right and hits the nail on the head. He finds the reason for the aversion of men of taste to evangelical religion in the unwillingness of natural man, especially when his ego has become puffed up by a sense of his own wisdom and achievements, to say humbly: "Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling." Having quoted the words of the poet concluding with these lines, "Of all that Wisdom dictates this the drift, That man is dead in sin and life a gift," he ends his essay thus: "That is what the Master said: 'The publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom before you'; that is the reason for the aversion of men of taste to evangelical religion."

A.

**The Convention of the Disciples.**—Last October the Disciples of Christ, the followers of Alexander Campbell, met in Kansas City for their international convention. About 2,500 persons attended. From the *Christian Century* we learn something about how these conventions are constituted. "It was not a delegate convention. Any member of a Disciples church could sit on the main floor and vote on all questions merely by registering his name and paying one dollar. For some reason there has always existed among the Disciples the strange idea that this is more 'democratic' than to have an assembly of deputies representing definite constituents. A few years ago a compromise was reached between the two ideas, and a small body of about 150 persons was created, called the Recommendations Committee. Its personnel is chosen by the State and provincial conventions on the basis of proportional representation. To this committee all resolutions are referred before the convention can take action. This plan works very well." Doctrinal questions, we are told, received but little notice. Even the matter of church unity was not much discussed. One of the chief resolutions passed refers to Army and Navy chaplaincies. The convention resolved "to renounce representation upon the chaplaincy commission of the Federal Council of Churches, which exercises the function of recommending Protestant candidates for chaplains commissions in the Army and Navy," and, secondly, to petition the Federal Council "to disband that commission and cease to exercise that function." These resolutions were passed over the head of the Recommendations Committee. The home of Alexander Campbell at Bethany, W. Va., where a few paces from the house is "his famous octagonal study, which has no windows excepting the glass roof," is to be preserved as a shrine.

A.

**The "Gospel" of the "Preaching Mission."** — While there can be little doubt that some of the men who were active in the "Preaching Mission" brought their hearers genuine Gospel truths, it is clear that some of the promoters of the movement, at least in some cities, did not succeed in divorcing the movement from the social gospel. The editor of the *Church at Work*, bulletin of the Metropolitan Church Federation of St. Louis, writes in a recent issue on "The Objectives of the Mission": "To strengthen the foundations of Christian faith on the part of every member of the local congregation and to stress anew what it means to be a Christian. To reawaken and reinterest the 'marginal' members of the local church and to enlist them in active Christian service. To make new disciples for Jesus Christ, our Lord, and to enlist them in the working fellowship of the church. The preacher will preach for conversion and seek to add new members to the church. To bring into active fellowship of local congregations all those who have been members of the congregation in other communities, but who have neglected to transfer their memberships by letter. To send forth Christians into the world with a zeal for the redemption of every area of life that all human relationships may reflect the spirit of Jesus Christ and the redemptive purpose for which He came." That the last paragraph in particular reflects the attitude of the social gospel seems to appear from another paragraph, in which the editor reflects on the outcome of the services in St. Louis: "What will be the outcome? Has this spiritual elevation been high enough and real enough, so that it will eventually be instrumental in producing moral achievements? Can St. Louis abolish its slums, abandon its brothels, cast out its gambling, its graft, its political corruption? Can it really become a righteous city, a holy city, a city of God?" When will men learn to distinguish between main objectives and by-products?

K.

**An Old Division Recalled.** — In the *Presbyterian* an aged pastor speaks of a separation which occurred in the Presbyterian Church a hundred years ago. At that time Conservatives and Liberals clashed over the question whether Presbyterians should continue to cooperate with the Congregational Church in conducting and supporting missionary societies. There had been a so-called "plan of union," according to which these two church-bodies worked together. The conservative element felt that this course was not proper and was not serving the best interests of their Church, and so they declared the old relation ended. Four synods at that time refused to acquiesce in this action and separated. It was thus that the New School body arose. In 1869, however, the two parties, Old School and New School, again united. What we cannot understand is that the writer in the *Presbyterian*, who himself belonged to the Old School and approves of the conservative course of the fathers in 1837, deplores the separation of Dr. Machen and his coworkers in 1936.

A.

**Interesting Foreign-Tongue Periodicals in Our Circles.** — The polyglot character of the Lutheran Church is evident also from the various foreign-tongue periodicals published within the confines of our Synod. To two of these we wish to direct the attention of our readers at this

time, adding the wish that at least a few of our pastors would subscribe for them and thus support the noble cause which they represent. We refer to *Le Luthérien Francais*, published by Pastor F. Kreiss of Paris, France, and to *Noticiero Luterano*, the organ of our Mexican Lutherans. Both monthly periodicals are written in a style so clear and in diction so simple that they are easily understood, and both offer their readers rich and varied reading-matter. The leading article in *Le Luthérien Francais*, entitled "Nos Revendications" is a thorough and timely refutation of present-day materialism, as this has perverted not only the masses, both rich and poor, but also, in the form of secularism, the Church, and is, at the same time, an ardent plea for penitent return to the Gospel of Christ. "Que Dieu ouvre les yeux à une génération aveugle!" This closing prayer certainly applies also to our American people. A noteworthy series of instructive and interesting articles is appearing under the heading "Le Luthéranisme, son Histoire, sa Foi et sa Vie." The fifth article of the series treats the subject "Le Retour aux Traditions Liturgiques de L'Eglise Sauvera-t-il les Eglises Luthériennes?" The article refers to the witness of the French Lutheran paper *Le Témoignage* against the Reformed *Semeur*, which had attacked its opponent's "Romanizing tendencies." While *Le Luthérien Francais* rejects the Calvinistic paper's criticism, it at the same time points out against *Le Témoignage* that not any kind of aping of Rome by the adoption of papistical liturgical forms, teachings, or conventions will save the cause of Lutheranism against unbelief, but persistent loyalty to God's Word. The article is very fine and timely and sounds a clear, sharp trumpet-tone against the offensive unionism in modern Franco-Lutheran circles. The article "Le Devoir des Chrétiens envers le Monde" presents to the readers the synodical essay discussed by our brethren in France at their last convention in February and points out the Christian's duty to fight boldly and faithfully against all enemies of the Gospel. The rest of the paper is devoted to church and other announcements.

While *Le Luthérien Francais* is rather dogmatical and controversial in contents, *Noticiero Luterano* is quite missionary and devotional, adapted to people who need the milk of Christian instruction. But its "newsy" columns give it a charm all its own. Its leading article (we quote from No. 1, Vol. II, October, 1936), "La Explosión que Derrumbó al Poder del Papa," shows how the Lutheran Reformation shook the power of the Papacy just because it brought to light the Scriptural doctrine of justification by faith. Other articles treat the following subjects: "The First Anniversary of *Noticiero Luterano*," "What Is Life?" ("A preparation for heaven"), "How to Judge Religions" ("What is their attitude toward the Biblical principles of *sola gratia* and *sola Scriptura*?") and "Anotaciones" (news brevities). Still more interesting perhaps than "Anotaciones" are the "Brisas del Campo" ("field breezes," i. e., "field reports") from San Antonio, Vanderbilt, and Three Rivers, Tex.; from Los Angeles, Cal.; from San Luis, Mo., and vicinity; from Chicago and New York, cities in which our Mexican Missions are represented. May God bless these missions and also our little Spanish mission paper, *Noticiero Luterano*, which costs but 35 cents a year and gives the reader \$35 worth of enjoyment and inspiration.

J. T. M.

**Statistics Regarding the Jews.**—In view of the continued hue and cry over the barbaric treatment which Jews receive in Germany, *Christianity Today* points out the fact that on April 1, 1936, the number of Jews living in Germany was still estimated by the *Reichsvertretung* at 409,000, while only about 93,000 Jews emigrated from Germany since June, 1933. These figures are fairly accurate since they were compiled by the German Emigration Department in cooperation with the *Hilfsverein der Juden in Deutschland* and the Palestine Office in Berlin on the basis of the number of emigrants assisted by these organizations. Of the 93,000 Jews who left Germany about 31,000 went to Palestine and 22,000 to other overseas countries. Eighteen thousand Jews who were not German citizens returned to their native countries in Eastern Europe. The others settled in England, France, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, and other European countries. Of the overseas countries, besides Palestine, the United States received 9,500 Jews, Brazil 4,500, Argentina 2,000, and South Africa 3,000. While in Germany there are still 409,000 Jews, Great Britain has only 340,000. In 1935 there were about 395,000 Jews in Palestine. Figured by continents, there are about 9,736,000 Jews in Europe, 560,000 in Africa, 936,000 in Asia, 5,031,000 in North and South America, and 27,000 in Australia and New Zealand. Throughout the world the Jews today number about 16,291,000, as Dr. Erwin Rawicz states in the *C.-V. Zeitung* of Berlin.

J. T. M.

## II. Ausland

**Mission-Work in Abyssinia.**—Dr. Adolf Keller of Geneva, Switzerland, writes on this topic as follows (we take the communication from the *Presbyterian*):—

"The executive committee of the European Central Office for Inter-church Aid, meeting at Geneva on August 28, heard a most interesting report from a missionary who has returned from Abyssinia. Two hundred evangelical missionaries were there in missionary work. Sweden, Switzerland, America, Great Britain, the Society for Propagating the Gospel, Germany, and other countries had missionary interests in the country. It is pioneer work. When the war began, many missionaries were called to the capital. Those near the frontier had to leave the country. The evangelical missionaries are pessimistic in looking towards the future. The missionaries represent for the Italian government an element of peace and pacification.

"The natives hate naturally the religion of the conqueror. 'Rather become Mohammedan than Catholic,' can often be heard. It is hoped that the government will allow evangelical missionaries to continue their work to a certain extent. Such a policy would be in harmony with Italian religious legislation, which has granted religious liberty to certain categories of Protestants, especially in the law of the *Cult ammesse* of 1929.

"The plan exists therefore to found a Waldensian colony in Abyssinia whose task would be to form a nucleus for evangelical colonization.

"The missionary who reported to the committee brought good news from his former flock, which is keeping together as before.

"Of course, a great Roman propaganda is now starting. The Abyssinians are of the Coptic or Monophysite religion, as one knows. Their chief, 'the Abuna,' is always elected from one of the Coptic monasteries in the Libyan Desert. The Roman Church goes very far in recognizing not the dogma, but the rites of other churches and has already formed among the Copts a Church united with Rome."

A.

Die „deutsche Bekenntnisfront von den Grundsäcken der Reformation gewichen“. Diese Anklage gegen die deutsche Bekenntnisfront hat mit Recht Prof. Dr. H. Koch vor einiger Zeit im „Lutheraner“ („Zur Lage der europäischen Freikirchen“) erhoben. Als man ihn deshalb zur Rede setzte („Ich muß doch mit ganzem Eifer betonen: die Bekenntniskirche in Deutschland kämpft einzig und allein gegen den sich breitmachenden Unglauben, ja die Bekenntnisstreuen in Deutschland kämpfen den heldenhaftesten, aber auch den herrlichsten Kampf um Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr“), nahm die „Freikirche“ den Kampf für Dr. Koch auf (Werner Schwinge, Pastor der freikirchlich-lutherischen Gemeinde in und um Breslau). Ihre kurzen, aber schlagenden Zitate haben auch Wert für uns hierzulande, eben weil die Bekenntnisfrontler drüber, wie so manche Theologen in der Vereinigten Lutherischen Kirche, die Schriftlehre von der Verbalinspiration so scharf angreifen. Nur einige Belege für die Bekenntnisfrontler drüber. Bekenntnisfrontler Karl Barth: „Die Bibel ist ein menschliches Dokument mitten in der ganzen Religionsgeschichte. Wir dürfen uns nicht wundern, in der Bibel dauernd Texten zu begegnen, die dem Wahrheitsbegriff der Geschichtswissenschaft nicht standzuhalten vermögen, sondern die der Historiker eben nur als ‚Sage‘ oder ‚Legende‘ wird bezeichneten können.“ Für den Bekenntnisfrontler Barth gibt es also in der Bibel Sage und Legende. Fürwahr, ein sehr heldenhafter Kampf um Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr! Bekenntnisfrontler D. Bänker, schlesischer Landesbischof (in einer Ansprache vor der Lutheraakademie in Sondershausen, 1935), redet von dem „Geheimtum der Verbalinspiration“. Nach Bänker ist es Aufgabe des Pfarrer, der „Verbalinspirationstheorie“ den „Boden zu entziehen“ und damit einen „Gewinn zu erzielen“. Bekenntnisfrontler Pfarrer Lie. Dr. Ulrich Bunzel schreibt (in seinem Heftchen „Das Alte Testament“): „Das Alte Testament ist ehrlich gegen sich selbst. Es will kein von Gott selbst diktirtes irrtumsloses Buch sein. Da es Menschen geschrieben haben, enthält es selbstverständlich Schreibfehler, auch geschichtliche und naturwissenschaftliche Irrtümer.“ Bekenntnisfrontler D. Wurm, württembergischer Landesbischof, sagte auf einer großen „Evangelischen Woche“ (abgedruckt in der „A. G. L. K.“): „Vom Glauben leben heißt aber für die Theologie nicht mehr wissen wollen, als es Gott uns durch sein Wort kundgetan hat. Eine mit den Mitteln der Logik gewonnene Sicherung war z. B. die altorthodoxe Verbalinspirationslehre. Gerade an ihrer verhängnisvollen Wirkung, an dem Zerstörungsprojekt, der mit durch sie eingeleitet wurde, sieht man, wie wenig sich die Kirche auf menschliche Sicherungen, seien sie dogmatischer, seien sie rechtlicher Art, verlassen kann.“ Ferner Bekenntnisfrontler Pfarrer Vogel, der in Berlin im Auftrag der Bekennenden Kirche Dogmatik liest, aber im Rahmen der Bekenntnisfront in Breslau seinen Flug über Genf und Basel nahm und mit Calvin und Barth für die furchtbare, gotteslästerliche Bornwahl eintrat, derzufolge gewisse Menschen „von Ewig-

heit her nach Gottes unumschränktem Machtwillen zum Zorn und Gericht in ewiger Höllenglut versehnen sind". Wöhnlich schreibt auch der Bekenntnisfrontler Hans Engelland (in einem Artikel „Allein aus Gnaden“ in Heft 37 der „Bekenntnenden Kirche“), daß „Gott nach seinem Vorsatz beruft und nicht beruft, nach seinem Vorsatz erwählt und verirrt“ usw. Wo Bekenntnisfrontler so schreiben, kann man nicht sagen, daß sie den heilhaftesten Kampf um Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehre kämpfen. Gewiß, manches schöne Wort stammt jetzt bei diesem Entscheidungskampf aus ihrer Feder; aber wo sie z. B. die wörtliche Eingebung der Heiligen Schrift leugnen oder auch die calvinistische Irrlehre von einer ewigen Bornwahl lehren, da machen sie mit den Feinden des lutherischen Bekenntnisses pax und blasen an diesem Punkt Rückzug. Es ist nötig, daß wir uns diese Punkte merken.

J. E. M.

**Geschlossene Kirchen in Mexiko.** über die gegenwärtige kirchliche Lage in Mexiko berichtet die katholische „Schönere Zukunft“: In ganz Mexiko sind derzeit nur 576 Priester zum Gottesdienst und zur Ausübung der Seelsorge gesetzlich zugelassen. Die Abhaltung von Gottesdiensten ist in den 33 Diözesen des Bundesstaates und in dem noch hinzukommenden Apostolischen Vikariat nur in 1,231 Kirchen gestattet. 1,460 Kirchen stehen offen, ohne daß in ihnen Gottesdienst gefeiert werden dürfte. In den Staaten Sonora, Zacatecas, Vera Cruz, Colima, Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche und Quintana Roo sind überhaupt keine Kirchen geöffnet. In der Bundeshauptstadt selbst stehen 31 Kirchen offen. Die Tatsache, daß seit dem 15. März v. J. 105 bereits geschlossene Kirchen wieder eröffnet wurden, besagt nicht sehr viel, weil die gehässigen Gouverneure der einzelnen Staaten diese entgegenkommende Maßnahme der Bundesregierung in ihrer Wirkung dadurch abgeschwächen, bzw. illusorisch zu machen suchen, daß sie aus eigener Machtvollkommenheit Gottesdienst und Seelsorge viel weiter einschränken, als es die Bundesgesetze tun. (A. E. L. R.)

**Religious Situation in Russia.** — Conrad Hoffman, Jr., reports from German missionary sources the following facts concerning “Religious Martyrdom in Russia”: “It is estimated that the number of Orthodox priests killed, imprisoned, or exiled to date by the Soviet authorities exceeds 40,000. Of the 24,000 Evangelical Russian preachers, on the basis of conservative estimates, fully 12,000 are in prison or exile. Of 200 Evangelical ministers only eight are still in office in Soviet Russia. Four of these are Russian Germans, three are Finns, and one an Estonian. Of Roman Catholic priests of German origin ten of the twenty-six who were still officiating in November, 1935, continue to minister in the interests of the churches, whereas of Catholic priests of Polish origin only four of the thirty that officiated in 1934 are still in office.”

N. L. C. N. B.

**Denmark's Reformation Quadrcentennial.** — In the *National Lutheran Council News Bulletin* Dr. Alfred Th. Joergensen presents a brief, but interesting article on this topic. The real reformer of Denmark was Hans Tausen, born in 1494, a former monk who had studied at the universities of Rostock, Louvain, and finally under Luther at Wittenberg. Returning in 1524, he began his work in Southern Jutland. When he, some time later, protected by the king Frederick I, came to Copen-

hagen, a mighty conflict ensued with the adherents of Roman Catholicism. When the Diet at Augsburg met, the Danish people had a diet of their own in Copenhagen, at which the Lutherans presented a confession in forty-three articles, *Confessio Hafniensis*. When Frederick I died in 1533, a religious and civil war broke out, the Romanists endeavoring to seat a man of their persuasion on the throne. In 1536 Christian III, the son of the former king, who as a youth had heard Luther in Worms, gained the final victory, and the future of Lutheranism was assured. "On October 30, 1536, Lutheranism was officially introduced in Denmark, and Bugenhagen came from Wittenberg to assist the king in organizing the Church." In 1921, of the 3,267,831 inhabitants of Denmark, 3,200,372 were listed as Lutherans. At that time 22,137 Roman Catholics were counted. To observe the quadricentennial, special books have been written, and throughout the country on November 1 festival services in honor of the occasion were to be held. A.

**Africa Coming to the Front.**—Africa, known but a few years ago as the Dark Continent, is now numerically the most Christian continent of the non-Christian world. Protestant Christians number 8,638,514; their children under fourteen years total 2,616,890, and scholars enrolled in Sabbath-schools 2,087,989. The stronghold of Protestant Christianity is the Union of South Africa, where Christians number 4,000,000 and their children 1,500,000. The old-established and highly organized religions of Asia are not here to impede progress, except in North Africa, Northern Nigeria, and areas of West and East Africa, where Islam offers an unyielding opposition to Christian penetration. Africa offers a unique opportunity for the formation of its youth and children and thereby for influencing the future of the whole continent. The magnificence of the task and its great possibilities promote a rivalry not altogether without its uses between Roman Catholic and Protestant missions.—*World Survey Service*.

**Die Beteiligung römischer Christen an heidnischen Zeremonien.** Die „A. E. L. R.“ schreibt: „Es ist bekannt, welche Schwierigkeiten der Mission in Japan infolge der herrschenden Staatsreligion, des Shintoismus, immer wieder entgegenstehen. Er dehnt ja seine Verehrung unmittelbar auf das herrschende Kaiserhaus aus und ist so zu einer auch staatspolitisch verpflichtenden Form geworden. Wenngleich die religiöse Seite des Shintoismus hinter seinem Staatscharakter immer stärker zurücktritt, so besteht doch für die Christen die schwierigende Frage, inwieweit sie sich an seinen Zeremonien und Riten beteiligen dürfen (als Christen natürlich), oder es entsteht, wenn sie sich nicht daran beteiligen, für sie der Verdacht, sie seien staatspolitisch nicht zuverlässig. Nun hat zu dieser Frage die Congregatio der Propaganda Fide nach eingehender Untersuchung der Sachlage folgende Normen aufgestellt: 1. Die Bischöfe des japanischen Kaiserreichs mögen die Gläubigen davon unterrichten, daß die Behördenstellen und ebenso die Allgemeinansicht der Personen von einer gewissen Bildung den herkömmlichen Zeremonien in den vom Staat verhuldeten Jinga einzig die Bedeutung der Vaterlandsliebe und der kindlichen Ehrfurcht vor dem Kaiserhaus und den großen Männern des Landes zuschreiben. Diese Zeremonien haben darum heute einen rein staatlichen Wert, und es ist den Katholiken erlaubt, an ihnen

teilzunehmen und sich gleich den andern Bürgern zu betragen, mit dem Vorbehalt, die eigene Haltung zu erläutern, sobald dies durch falsche Anschaugung darüber notwendig erscheinen sollte. 2. In gleicher Weise können die Bischöfe den Gläubigen erlauben, gleich allen andern an den Bestattungen und Heiraten sowie an den sonstigen japanischen Riten, die das japanische Gesellschaftsleben vorschreibt, teilzunehmen, wenn diese Zeremonien, obgleich vielleicht heidnisch-religiösen Ursprungs, durch die örtliche Gewohnheit und nach allgemeiner Ansicht zu den Höflichkeitssitten und zu den Erweisungen gegenseitiger Zuneigung geworden sind. 3. In den Eidesformeln über die Riten mögen die Priester überall dort, wo sie gebräuchlich sind, all das in die Praxis umsetzen, was die vorliegenden Anordnungen der Congregatio de Propaganda Fide in dieser Materie festlegen, und sich von jeder Auseinandersetzung fernhalten."

Wert haben diese Entscheidungen auch für uns, weil sie auf dem Prinzip der Trennung von Staat und Religion aufgebaut sind und so in der Theorie wenigstens ein rechtes fundamentum dividendi zur Anwendung kommen lassen. Praktisch jedoch, wie evangelische Missionsberichte betonen, sind in den shintoistischen Zeremonien Religion und Kirche nicht so getrennt, wie es die römische Congregatio darstellt, und auch hierin zeigt der Papismus seine bekannte „Dehnbarkeit“ auf kirchlich-praktischem Gebiet, die er auch sonst in der Geschichte an den Tag gelegt hat, wo es galt, sich vorläufig zu duden, um später der Welt sein siegendes Zepter zu zeigen.

J. T. M.

**Religious Populations of the World.**—Just how large is the population of the world, and how many of the millions that people the globe are Christians? This question often confronts the pastor as he touches upon the topic in his missionary addresses. From *World Dominion* the *Christian Herald* quotes the following calculations as the "most authentic distribution of the religious populations available," adding that it is a striking fact to be noticed that the world's population has passed 2,000,000,000. The calculations of *World Dominion* are as follows: I. Christian Religions: Catholic, 350,000,000, or 17%; Orthodox, 150,000,000, or 7%; Protestant, 230,000,000, or 11%. II. Non-Christian Religions: Confucians, 350,000,000, or 17%; Hindus, 245,000,000, or 12%; Moslems (note their growth in the last two decades), 255,000,000, or 12%; Buddhists, 150,000,000, or 7%; Animists, 140,000,000, or 6%; Shintoists, 25,000,000, or 1%; Jews, 17,000,000 (also here a considerable growth), or 1%; non-classified, 128,000,000, or 6%. Altogether: 2,040,000,000. That means that 65 per cent. of the world's population are still outside the pale of the Christian Church, which holds only 35 per cent. of the people that live upon earth.

J. T. M.



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 Book Review — Literatur
 

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**Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament.** In Verbindung mit sechzehn Gelehrten herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart. Band III, Lieferung 1 bis 8, S. 1 bis 512. Subskriptionspreis der Lieferung: RM. 2.90.

Dieses große Wörterbuch, dessen zweiten Band wir in dieser Zeitschrift (VI, 951) unsern Lesern zur Kenntnis gebracht haben, schreitet rüstig voran, und wir machen, da nun schon acht Lieferungen vom dritten Bande vorliegen, wieder einmal darauf aufmerksam. Es ist wirklich ein einzigartiges, umfassendes Werk, und manche der Hauptartikel sind fast Monographien. Noch nie ist in einem Wörterbuch so viel Material zusammengetragen worden, aber der Besitzer und Leser darf auch nie den ganz modernen Standpunkt dieses Werkes außer acht lassen. Es kommt sehr viel darauf an, wer der Verfasser eines Artikels ist. Ist er mehr konservativ gerichtet, so wird man seine Ausführungen mit viel Zustimmung lesen; ist er stark religiengeschichtlich gerichtet, so wird man gar viele Fragezeichen zu machen haben. Wir nennen einige der Hauptartikel. Θάρατος und seine Wortgruppe umfaßt Seite 7 bis 25. Der Verfasser ist Bultmann, ein bekannter Religiengeschichtler. So wundern wir uns nicht über den Satz (S. 14): „Wohl kann das Woher und Warum des Todes mythologisch verstanden werden, indem der Tod als dämonische Person aufgefaßt wird (1 Kor. 15, 26; Apol. 6, 8; 20, 13 f.) oder wenn als Herr des Todes der Teufel bezeichnet wird (Hebr. 2, 14).“ Die wichtige Wortgruppe θέλω wird auf zwanzig Seiten behandelt. Kamentlich ist der Artikel θέλω, an dem vier Gelehrte gearbeitet haben, ganz umfassend (S. 65 bis 123); aber da finden sich nun auch Sätze wie diese, daß Moses der Stifter „des Jahweglaubens“ ist, daß „die sogenannte jahwistische Überlieferung . . . die unterscheidenden Merkmale der vor dem Jahwediensst herrschenden älteren Gotteserkenntnis durch Einfügung des Namens Jahwe in die Darstellung oder durch Tilgung ursprünglicher Ausdrucksformen zu verirren bemüht ist“ (S. 80) — bekannte Behauptungen der modernen höheren Kritik. Ebenso ist der Artikel über die Wortgruppe λεός eine ganze Abhandlung (S. 221 bis 284). Wie da zum Beispiel der Begriff des Hohenpriesters behandelt wird, zeigen folgende in Abschnitte zerlegte und weiter ausgeführte Gedankentreihen: „Christus, der erhabene Hohepriester. 1. Die Solidarität mit der Menschheit. 2. Das Werden des ewigen Hohenpriesters geschieht durch Bewährung der Sohnschaft. 3. Der sündlose Hohepriester. 4. Der Gegensatz zum sarkistischen Opfer. 5. Der Hohepriester Christus bahnt den Zugang zum Throne, zur vollen Gottesgegenwart“ (S. 279—282). Sehr wichtige Artikel sind auch Ἰησοῦς und die Wortgruppe Ιάσονος, versöhnen. Dabei sagt der Bearbeiter des alttestamentlichen Begriffs, Prof. Herrmann in Münster, zum Schluß seiner Ausführung: „Doch der Gedanke einer Substitution . . . vorhanden gewesen ist, sollte . . . nicht geleugnet werden“ (S. 311). Aber je weiter das Werk forschreitet und je länger wir es gebrauchen, desto stärker müssen wir auch betonen, was wir schon wiederholt gesagt haben, und den Besitzern einschärfen, daß dieses Wörterbuch weit hinausgeht über ein Wörterbuch und über alle bisher erschienenen Wörterbücher zum Neuen Testament. Es bringt nicht nur die Sprachwissenschaft zur Darstellung — die eigentliche Aufgabe eines Wörterbuchs —, sondern, und zwar ganz intensiv, die vergleichende Religiengeschichtsforschung, und zwar nicht vom festen biblischen Stand-

punkt, von der Tatsache der göttlichen Offenbarung aus, sondern vom Standpunkt der Entwicklung der religiösen Vorstellungen der verschiedenen Religionen aus. Auf Grund der vergleichenden Sprach- und Religionswissenschaft entsteht hier eine neue „biblische Theologie“, und darum muß das Werk, dessen Wert wir sonst anerkennen, doch auch mit großer Vorsicht gebraucht werden.

L. Fürbringer

**The Gospel Selections of the Ancient Church.** An exegetico-homiletic treatment by R. C. H. Lenski. A series of Gospel texts for the entire church-year. Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O. 1,003 pages, 6×9½. Price, \$4.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The readers of this journal are aware that the author of this book is no longer with us, having been summoned to his eternal rest last summer. Since reviews of Dr. Lenski's books have appeared on these pages quite frequently of late, it is not necessary to say much about his workmanship. It will almost suffice to remark that the volume here announced shares the characteristics and excellences of its predecessors. I have to mention, however, that no one should fail to note the very considerable size of the book, which will help to convince him that its price is not exorbitant. Next it ought to be emphasized that the work is eminently practical, presenting not only exegetical discussions on the old Gospel-lessons, loved by our people and the favorite pulpit texts of our clergy, but appending in each case to the exegetical section a division called Homiletical Aid, where some hints on the handling of the text in sermons and brief outlines are submitted. Nor should this review fail to mention that the work opens with a general introduction, in which valuable information is furnished on the Christian church-year and the use of the old pericopes by our preachers is explained and defended.

All who have read Dr. Lenski's books know that his constant aim is faithfully to present Scripture-teaching as set forth in the Lutheran Confessions and to exalt Christ. It is chiefly for this reason that conservative Lutherans can be happy to see his books used extensively by Lutheran pastors. Here and there an exposition appears which is not tenable. The study of Matt. 22, 1—14 (20th Sunday after Trinity) has been justly criticized by Prof. J. P. Meyer in the *Theologische Quartalschrift* for October, 1936, p. 293 f. It is impossible to argue the question here, which has to do with the relation between election and faith. I merely wish to say that whatever may be taught on election in other passages of the Scriptures, this pericope does not state or imply that faith comes first and election follows. It merely warns that hearing the Gospel outwardly is not a proof that one is an elect of God and that there are far more who have a mere outward contact with the Word than those who belong to the chosen children of the Lord. W. ARNDT

**Glimpses of Paul.** By George M. Strombeck. Christian Service Press, Moline, Ill. 88 pages, 5×7½. Price, 25 cts., postpaid. Order through Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This little book consists of sixteen articles which originally were published in the *Sunday-school Times* and the *Evangelical Beacon*. The intention was not to furnish a complete biography of Paul, but, as the

title indicates, to describe particular aspects, or phases, of his extraordinary career. After an introductory chapter of a general nature, having the caption "Paul the Man and Superman," we have chapters with such headings as "A Young Man Named Saul," "Damascus," "Arabia." The author writes with warmth and eloquence and, where opportunity offers, introduces practical applications. I did not meet any statement to which I should have to object on doctrinal grounds. Here and there I questioned the author's exegetical conclusions. The statement (p. 43) which refers thus to the visit of Paul and Barnabas in Jerusalem at the time of the apostolic council, "This time it was not with a gift, but to inquire if it were necessary for Gentiles to submit to the Law of Moses to be saved," I consider incorrect. It was not to receive instruction, but to restore harmony in the Church that these two great leaders went to Jerusalem. Similarly, when it is held that Paul, after his clash with Barnabas, began the second missionary journey without the Spirit's guidance (p. 45), I believe that an unwarranted interpretation is put on the narrative. Disregarding a few passages of this sort, I can heartily recommend the book and believe that especially Sunday-school teachers will read it with delight and profit.

W. ARNDT

**The Church of Christ and the Problems of the Day.** By Karl Heim, D. D., Ph. D., professor of theology in the University of Tuebingen, Germany. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 172 pages,  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, \$1.75.

K. Heim (Lutheran, "positive"), "the most popular professor today, as Tholuck was in his day," delivered these seven lectures (Rationalization: Its Power and Limits; the New "German Faith"; Luther and the Problems of To-day; The Reality of Sin and the Reality of Atonement; Christ, His Church, and the World; The Power of Prayer; "I Am the Resurrection and the Life") at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., in 1935. The one great problem facing the world, "which also caused Luther so much trouble, is this: If, at death, I must appear alone before the face of God, burdened with the guilt of my past, how shall I obtain the grace of God?" (P. 81.) Reason cannot give the answer. Reason cannot solve even the minor problems confronting the world. It has "not yet succeeded in finding some way of extirpating unemployment." (P. 7.) And so with regard to any real difficulty enmeshing the world: "Human reason, in its attempt to become master of reality, has reached a limit which it cannot pass." (P. 7.) Nor can the "German Faith" solve our problems, not the minor ones nor the one great problem. Both forms of this "racial religion," the primitive form represented by E. Bergmann and the sublimated form represented by W. Hauer, deny the enormity and reality of sin. Together with idealism (Fichte, etc.) and mysticism this view of man and life does not even face the problem. All these philosophies preach "faith in the goodness, nobility, strength, and heroism in men." (P. 76.) When the Christian Church asks the world to face the problem, to realize its need of salvation, it gets no hearing. "Insistence on the reality of sin is the stumbling-block in Christianity." (P. 75.) What the world needs to know is, first, its lost condition and the reality of the atonement. The Church must teach men to say: "We

men can be helped only by a Savior who not merely goes before us as a shining example, but who accomplishes vicariously what we could not do ourselves. We are entirely dependent on His substitutionary work for our eternal salvation" (p. 91), "to learn what Luther taught George Spenlein: 'Dear Brother, learn Christ, and above all as the Crucified One; learn to praise Him, to despair of yourself, and say: Thou, Lord Jesus, art my Righteousness. But I am Thy sin.'" (P. 92.) To bring this message to the world is the chief business of the Church. And living itself on this Gospel, the Church is enabled to serve the world in other respects. "The first service can be described in this way: A Church which lives under the guidance of Christ is the conscience of the nation and people in the midst of which it lives. . . . The second service of the Church, which any man in the world can feel, is that the Church is not only the conscience of the people, but also a helping power, a good Samaritan, who heals the wounds which arise out of the present battle of life." (P. 122 f.) The Church needs the almighty power of God to accomplish its great work and needs to lay hold of this power in prayer. "If we are to rediscover inner strength for the battle of life, we must first of all rebuild the ruined altar of morning and evening prayer." "The quarter of an hour in which we are alone with God every morning is more important than the whole remainder of the day." (Pp. 147, 151.) And the divine power for which the Christian people pray comes to them through the Gospel of the resurrection of Jesus, of the resurrection of the body, and of eternal life.

This is good Scriptural teaching. Unfortunately some statements are made which go against Scripture. We could wish that the last two pages (95, 96) of the fine chapter on "The Reality of Sin and Atonement" had not been written. After making the statement "I can be helped only by the imputed righteousness of Christ (*aliena iustitia Christi*), of which Luther speaks, writing in 1516 to the troubled monk George Spenlein" (see above), Dr. Heim says: "It is a striking fact that neither Paul nor John has set up a detailed theory, either a theory of sacrifice or a detailed doctrine of the vicarious punishment or of ransom. They did not find the decisive matter in the reconciliation here." We are wondering whether this amounts to a denial of the previous statement regarding the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the sinner and of similar statements: "The holy Son of God was lifted up on the cross and there suffered death in my stead" (p. 93)? Just what does the author mean when he says on p. 95: "None of these passages [Rom. 8, 32; John 3, 16] speak in detail of what Christ did on earth in order to accomplish our reconciliation, but preeminently of what happened previously in the heart of God. God offers an innermost sacrifice"? Was or was not Christ's work "substitutionary" (p. 91)? — "The essence of Christianity does not lie . . . in a system of doctrine, but in a Person." (P. 99.) "Jesus let it be understood repeatedly from His words and actions that everything depends not on the acceptance of the truth of particular propositions or the appropriation of a definite view of life, but on an attitude to His Person." (P. 114.) This is a false contrast. Surely everything depends on our attitude to this Person; but no one can take the right attitude unless he

knows what this Person did for him and offers him in the Gospel, he must hear and accept the *doctrine of Christ*. — The fine chapter on "The Power of Prayer" is marred by philosophical and scientific speculations: "Prayer not only recollects and concentrates the inner man, but also exercises the strongest of influences on the outside world, even if we do not yet have a scientific understanding of the effect of spirit on the physical world." "It was obvious that there must be a kind of wireless telegraphy between a praying soul and the person for whom it makes intercession." (P. 136 f.) — The following statement is not true: There is in modern youth the desire "to surrender themselves body and soul to a power which will lift them out of the pitiful comforts and the trivialities of every day and will ask the sacrifice of their existence. All men, even the skeptic and the secularist, who can no longer believe in a world beyond, long fundamentally not for the pleasures of life nor for security. They all yearn for a holy passion which they can allow to dominate them." (P. 134.) — Dr. Heim is looking for a "millennium" to set in before the final coming of Christ "in which peace reigns (Is. 2, 4)," "when a new order shall descend from God," when Christ "shall be the life of the whole of humanity." (Pp. 19. 72. 132.)

TH. ENGELDER

**The Menace of Modernism.** By Merrill T. MacPherson, president of the Philadelphia Fundamentalists and pastor of the Central North Broad Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pa. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 31 pages. Price, 20 cts.

This brochure offers an eloquent address by an outstanding Fundamentalist, delivered at the Founder's Week Conference of the Moody Bible Institute at Chicago. A "special word of introduction" is supplied by Chas. E. Trumbull, editor of the *Sunday-school Times*. Here is a clear, thorough, and most effective arraignment of Modernism, with much valuable material to pastors wishing to speak on the subject before their church societies. The writer champions the peculiar views of most Fundamentalists on Sunday protection by law, prohibition, etc.

J. T. MUELLER

**The Church and the Churches.** By Prof. Karl Barth of the University of Basel, Switzerland. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 92 pages,  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, 75 cts.

This book offers an attempt on the part of the well-known proponent of the "dialectical theology" to solve the problem of disunion among the various churches of the Christian religion. One may welcome every effort of this kind, especially if it comes from such a well-known authority as Professor Barth. It is somewhat unfortunate that the attempt lacks Biblical clarity and cohesion. The reviewer was not able to follow the distinction between the *una sancta* and the so-called visible churches, as set forth by Barth. His argumentation finds its climax in the paragraphs connected with the question "What are the essential conditions in which it would be possible to share in such a genuine effort of union towards a living Church?" His answer is fourfold: 1. Such a step should in no circumstances be an act of confessional weakness. 2. No secular

motive . . . should be allowed to prompt a church to surrender its individuality. 3. Such a surrender must not imply the abandonment, in one iota, of anything which a Church believes it necessary to assert in a certain way and not otherwise. 4. Only one thing must be abandoned, namely, a failure in obedience to Christ. If by this last point the author means an unequivocal obedience to the inerrant Word of God, then we may consider that a basis of agreement is not beyond hope. But as long as he can still write: "It is unthinkable that, whichever way one looks and listens, one should hear people saying, in quiet or vehement tones, with kindly understatement or undisguised sternness, 'You have a different spirit of ours,'" this seems to imply a direct disagreement with Luther concerning his stand at Marburg and a consequent disavowal of an unequivocal acceptance of the Word alone. If that is Barth's stand, we cannot follow him.

P. E. KRETTZMANN

**Paul Gerhardt, der Sänger fröhlichen Glaubens.** Von D. Karl Hesselbach. Mit 19 Abbildungen. Gustav Schömanns Verlagsbuchhandlung (Gustav Fick), Leipzig und Hamburg. 208 Seiten  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ . Preis, farbtoniert: RM. 3.60; gebunden: RM. 4.

Das Lesen dieses Buches war eine rechte Herzerquickung, zumal da die ganze Anlage dieser Biographie sich nach dem Untertitel „Der Sänger fröhlichen Glaubens“ richtet. Denn der Verfasser hat es meisterhaft verstanden, in seiner sympathischen Schilderung des Lebens Gerhardts die Lieder des gottbegnadeten Sängers mit hineinzuflechten. Über siebzig von den Liedern Gerhardts sind so zur Verwendung gekommen. Auch die Schilderung des Charakters Gerhardts ist innig und anmutig, so daß der Leser ein gutes und genügendes Bild von dem Assaph der lutherischen Kirche gewinnt. Allerdings hat der Verfasser des Buches augenscheinlich nicht das volle Verständnis für die Fesigkeiten Gerhardts in dem bekannten Streit zwischen dem Großen Kurfürsten und den lutherischen Predigern Berlins. Aber dies tritt nur an wenigen Stellen zutage. Die neunzehn Abbildungen erhöhen den Wert des Buches um ein bedeutendes. Das Buch ist nicht nur für den Theologen von großem Wert, sondern auch für solche Gemeindeglieder, die noch die deutsche Sprache wertschätzen und sonderlich auch die geistliche Dichtung der lutherischen Kirche liebhaben.

P. E. KRETTZMANN

**Biography of Dr. Friedrich Bente.** By Josephine Bente. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1936. 112 pages. Cloth. Dr. Bente's signature in gold on the front cover. Price, 75 cts.

While there is probably no great historical value in these reminiscences, to us whose teacher Dr. Bente was these words penned by a loving hand are interesting, and we appreciate them. They recall another, a more intimate, side of the man whom we knew as one of our keenest theologians and most interesting instructors. Particularly do the "Gleanings" at the end of the little volume call to mind Dr. Bente's remarkable ability of giving definitions in brief, concise, striking form, of presenting his thoughts in epigrammatic sentences. "Duty well done, that is success." "Let your light shine—but not on yourself." "If failure comes, may it find our sword broken at the hilt!" Whoever knew the man will enjoy reading the book.

THEO. HOYER

**Mothers and Their Sons.** A Series of Twelve Sermons. Edited by Rev. J. Harold Gwynne. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price, \$1.00.

Each of these sermons is by a different pastor. In succession they treat the following mothers: the mother of Cain and Abel, of Jacob and Esau, of Moses, of Samson, of Samuel, of Solomon, of John the Baptist, of Jesus, of James and John, of James and Joses, of Mark, of Timothy. Those who are well able to distinguish between chaff and wheat, between gold, silver, and precious stones and wood, hay, and stubble will find many gems in this book, much that may be used when preaching upon bringing up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But these things must be found and must be carefully selected; for interwoven with them there is much that is worthless, and some things are even harmful. The editor, Rev. Gwynne, for instance, writing concerning Eve's fall into sin, speaks of Eve's *nature as being too trustful*. He deals with this fall as if we ought rather to pity Eve than to condemn her; however, we dare never to forget that all sinners are to be pitied, but they must also be condemned. There is an insoluble mystery connected with the fall of man; but we never dare speak of it as if man had been created weak or as if his sin were in any wise to be excused.—The preacher who writes concerning Rebekah tells us that Esau married Canaanite women "in order to spite his parents." In the Scripture there is no warrant for such a statement. Esau married Canaanite women, and these women were a grief of mind to his parents; but we are not told that he had married them in order to spite them. All that we read of Esau leads us to believe that he married these women without considering his parents' wishes. He neither tried to spite his parents, nor did he try to please them. Later on he married also women of Semitic extraction, and there we read: "Esau, seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac, his father, then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son," Gen. 28, 8, 9. Another fault that we find with these sermons is their excessive use of superlatives and exaggeration, and there is a mixture of somewhat unreliable experience with the words of Revelation. But, after all, the preacher who knows how to make his selections may find material, anecdotes, and terse quotations which may stimulate thought and, in the proper setting, may even be used in a sermon. The very selection of texts which we find here is helpful. M. S. SOMMER

**Proceedings of the Ninth Convention of the Northern Nebraska District**  
of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Held at Columbus, Nebraska, August 17—21, 1936. 60 pages, 6×9. Price, 15 cts., postpaid. Order from Rev. G. W. Lobeck, Scribner, Nebr.

This report, arranged in the customary manner, offers a digest of the English doctrinal paper delivered by Dean J. H. C. Fritz, his topic being "The Real and Final Purpose of the Christian's Life in This World," and a somewhat more comprehensive German essay, by Pastor W. E. Harms, on *Gleichgueltigkeit in Lehre und Praxis mit besonderer An-*

*wendung auf unsere heutigen Gemeindeverhaeltnisse.* Both papers contain very important points, which pastors should bring to the attention of their members time and again, especially in these days of indifference.

P. E. KRETMANN

**Lutheran Annual, 1937.** — Amerikanischer Kalender für deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1937. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, 15 cts. each.

The two old annuals that most of us have used for many years and that are indispensable for pastors and all active members of the Church. Old and yet new. One part of the annuals we do not want changed: the usual calendar pages and the lists of pastors, teachers, and officials of the Synodical Conference, brought up to date, one alphabetical, the other arranged according to States and post-offices; a list of seminaries, colleges, and charitable institutions; a list of religious periodicals published within the Synodical Conference. Besides this, however, each of the two annuals contains a selection of Bible-readings for each day in the year on two pages; Dr. Kieffer's statistics of all religious bodies in the United States; a special statistical table of the Lutheran bodies in the United States; and the latest figures on the synods forming the Synodical Conference and affiliated bodies; then eighteen pages of reading-matter, different in the two editions, well selected, instructive, edifying. No Lutheran home should be without one or both of them.

THEO. HOYER

**Fourth Bulletin of Distinctive Choral Music Selected for the Choral Union.** Issued by the Walther League, Chicago, Ill.

It is a pleasure to call the attention of pastors, teachers, and other leaders in young people's work to this pamphlet of 35 pages, which, after a few introductory chapters, presents the selections for the 1937 International Mass Concert as well as suggestions for the various seasons of the church-year. If the Lutheran Church desires to keep her heritage of song, she will have to follow programs such as that offered by the Walther League, which has certainly shown its value during the last years.

P. E. KRETMANN

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